








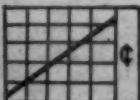

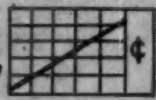
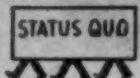





# Consumers Union

## R E P O R T S

VOL. 7, NO. 1

JANUARY 1942

Here is a bath towel  It is named  and the company which makes it spends many dollars  telling people about it  A year ago  CU tested this  and nine other brands of towels. Last month  CU tested them all again  to see what had happened to them. This is what happened to  It went up in price  and down in quality  What happened to the other brands? Three went up in price, too,  while the quality stayed about the same  But six either went down in price  or remained unchanged. And three of these six improved in quality   
**MORAL:**  *The buyer whose buys are usually best is the buyer who buys on the basis of test.*

### SHEETS & TOWELS

*A guide to the White Sales*

### MOTOR OILS FOR WINTER DRIVING

### HOW TO PREPARE FOR A BLACKOUT

### SEWING MACHINES

### NOSE DROPS: SOME FACTS about THEM

### AUTO INSURANCE: HOW TO BUY IT

# CONSUMERS UNION'S PLEDGE TO THE NATION

Far surpassing every other consideration now is this one: that national unity, national sacrifice and national enterprise must combine in the maximum war effort possible to us. For Americans as consumers—along with Americans as producers—personal interests must be subordinated to the needs of the whole people at war. And for consumers there is now an absolute obligation to spend their family earnings in such a way as to maintain health and efficiency at a peak while putting the minimum strain on vital materials and services. Because it was established for the very purpose of aiding families to buy wisely and to avoid waste and to maintain health and living standards, and because it is the largest technical organization providing such guidance, Consumers Union recognizes a special responsibility to the nation. In full awareness of that responsibility, we pledge ourselves to do everything in our power to help Americans as consumers make the greatest possible contribution to the national need.

A RESOLUTION ADOPTED ON DECEMBER 10, 1941 BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## Prices & The House Psychology

**I**T WAS early in August that the Administration's Emergency Price Control Bill went to Congress. The House Banking & Currency Committee thereupon proceeded to play cat and mouse with it for four months.

Committee members went on vacation, kept witnesses on the stand for hours and days asking about everything except the issues of price control, struck out one provision after another.

In the end—distorted, torn through the middle, frayed at the edges and bearing about as much resemblance to a price control bill as a speculator's bankbook—the bill was passed by a House that should be eternally ashamed of its actions.

Meanwhile, prices had steadily risen. In the four months it took the House to subvert and pass the bill, consumers lost several *billions* of dollars through uncontrolled price increases.

A little over a month ago, the Senate got the bill. As we go to press the Senate has restored almost every provision torn out by the House and has made the bill again something of what a price control measure ought to be.

Meanwhile, prices have continued to rise. Through our weekly *Bread & Butter* we have been relating the facts as to just how much and where they have risen, and we refer you to that for the unhappy details.

Here we want to say one thing. The price control bill will shortly come to a vote in the Senate and will then proceed to a conference committee where differences between the House and Senate versions will have to be ironed out.

If the House psychology concerning price control prevails in this committee, consumers can close the books on any semblance of decent living standards and the country as a whole had better set out spotters to watch for the cracks and crumbings that will shortly appear in the national economy.

To consumers we say: if you never wrote a letter in your life, write some now. Find out the names of your representatives and Senators, if you don't know them, and tell each of them that the Emergency Price Control Bill in its original form has got to go through and at once.

## No Price Increase for Lucky

**L**AST MONTH the American Tobacco Co. (*Lucky Strike*) put out a feeler announcing that it was going to up the price of *Luckies*. In the past an announcement like that meant what it said, and more besides. It meant that the other big cigarette companies would go right along with the rise, and it meant the public be damned. When you're part of a trust, a simple little price announcement can mean all that.

But we note as the new year starts that prices are still at the old stand. For the direct cause of which this is the happy effect, thank Leon Henderson and his Office of Price Administration. Mr. Henderson found American Tobacco's justification of its proposed increase inadequate, and so he set a ceiling freezing prices where they were.

Mr. Henderson, in thus serving the public interest and necessity, deserves due credit. Without detracting from same, it may be pointed out that Mr. Henderson's OPA hasn't always set ceilings so promptly. The reason for its good work on this occasion, we think, at least partly reflects the good work of another government department and of 13 honest citizens in Lexington, Ky.

Our reference is to the Anti-Trust Division of the Dep't of Justice, to the 12 members of the jury who heard the Division's case against "The American Tobacco Company, et al," and to the judge (Hon. H. Church Ford) who handed down sentences last month shortly before American Tobacco tried and failed to push its price up.

## IN THIS ISSUE



The purposes of Consumers Union, as stated in its charter, are "to obtain and provide for consumers information and counsel on consumer goods and services . . . to give information and assistance on all matters relating to the expenditure of earnings and the family income . . . to initiate and to cooperate with individual and group efforts seeking to create and maintain decent living standards for consumers."

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Cover by B. Tagawa

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**CORRESPONDENCE** should be addressed to Consumers Union, 17 Union Square, New York City. CU regrets that time does not permit answers to inquiries for special information.

JANUARY, 1942

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We played a small part in this case as a witness for the government side. Because we saw at first hand the energetic efforts of the tobacco companies to keep the government from winning, we have a special appreciation of the significance of the jury's verdict. That verdict, at the conclusion of 20 weeks of testimony, was "guilty," and no ifs, ands or buts.

The "Big Three" of the business—American Tobacco Co., Liggett & Myers (*Chesterfield*) and R. J. Reynolds (*Camel*),<sup>1</sup> along with 13 of their executives and a *Lucky Strike* subsidiary—were convicted on the following charges: (1) combination and conspiracy to fix prices; (2) combination and conspiracy to create a monopoly; (3) attempting to achieve a monopoly; and (4) achieving it.

Testimony at the trial consumed some 3,000,000 words of record, besides 1275 exhibits, presented by witnesses of accuser and accused. Every step of the process, from tobacco grower to cigarette smoker, was covered by the Anti-Trust Division in its sweeping indictment. Here are some of the high points of the evidence introduced by the government.

The million and a half tobacco growers have been at the mercy of the tobacco companies, who fixed dates and places of auctions, then used secret grades and unintelligible gibberish (remember the *Lucky Strike* auctioneer on the radio?) to go about buying different types of tobacco at different auctions. Thus, while all the companies eventually got the same kinds of tobacco, they got them at different times and places so that they never had to bid against one another.

To keep their position intact, the companies maintained \$100,000,000 inventories in warehouses, so that they were in a position to thumb their noses at farmers who thought they ought to get more money. At the same time, they kept prices just high enough so that it didn't pay farmers to try other crops.

Then, to keep up their carefully built price policy, they had a policing system whereby they kept tabs on the retailer.

Impressive charts were brought out showing that, in the past 12 years, price movements of the "Big Three" had been simultaneous; whenever *Lucky Strike* went up a half-cent, *Chesterfield* and *Camel* were sure to string along.

And finally, when the ultimate consumer got the cigarettes, they were so alike that, with brand names concealed, he could not tell one brand from another; could not pick his own "favorite" brand out of two or more. This is where we came in. Results of extensive tests conducted by CU were made available to the Dep't of Justice and presented by a CU technician in the course of the trial. (See *CU Reports*, September 1941, for a full report of the tests and the trial testimony.)

In a case of this nature the question of sentences is a complex one; it's impossible to estimate the extent to which the cigarette trust robbed the public by virtue of its combination and conspiracy. But within the limitations set by law (up to \$20,000 for each corporation and each individual) Judge Ford did pretty well.

The 16 corporate and individual defendants were fined \$15,000 each, a total of \$250,000.

• • •

What the results of the case will add up to in the end can hardly be told now. It would be a little on the naive side to expect that the tobacco trust is ended, or even that many of the practices for which the companies were convicted will do other than crop up in new forms. Trusts are both durable and resourceful and the laws of the land just aren't strong enough to do the job that needs doing.

Even so, we have a suspicion that that projected price increase might have been pushed through if the trial in Lexington had ended differently.

<sup>1</sup> The manufacturers of *Old Gold* and *Philip Morris* were included in the original indictment, but were dropped out of the case on agreeing to accept whatever decision was reached.



# TECHNICAL SECTION

## OF CONSUMERS UNION REPORTS

Ratings of products represent the best judgment of staff technicians or of consultants—more than 200 specialists selected for competence and freedom from commercial bias—in university, governmental and private laboratories. Samples for test are in practically all cases obtained on the open market by CU's shoppers. Ratings are based on laboratory tests, carefully controlled use tests, the opinion of qualified authorities, the experience of a large number of persons, or on a combination of these factors. Most ratings of necessity reflect opinion as well as scientific data. For even with rigorous tests, interpretation of findings is often a matter on which expert opinion differs. It is Consumers Union's pledge that such opinions as enter into its evaluations shall be as competent, honest, and free from bias as it is possible to make them.

● "Best Buys" should give greater return per dollar although some products rated "Also Acceptable" may be of higher quality. Except where otherwise noted, a product rated "Not Acceptable" is judged to be of inferior quality or is considered to be potentially harmful.



## A Guide to the White Sales

*In the face of rising prices and changing quality, it's harder than ever to find the best buys in textiles (and it never was easy). CU's ratings of leading brands of towels and sheets shed some light*

### BATH TOWELS

LIKE SCORES of other consumer goods, the general run of bath towels has been hit by the drive to lower quality and raise prices. That's not surprising. What is both surprising and gratifying, is that a few brands have maintained or raised quality while holding down prices. Discovering these brands is probably the most important result of CU's recent tests on 13 brands of bath towels.

The effect of manufacturers' maneuverings in the field of price and quality is that the order of quality of bath towels as revealed by last year's tests (January 1941 Reports) has been considerably juggled. The *Dundee* towel, tops last year, is now near the bottom of the list. Last year's third best, the *Cannon Gym Towel* is now ninth in a group of 13 and its price has gone up 18¢, size considered. The *Hale Bros. Iron Thread*, formerly second, now heads the list, but at a higher price.

On the other, and happier, side of the picture, is *Gimbel's Gramercy*, which has climbed from seventh to third place without an accompanying rise in price. Likewise, *Cooperative Distributors' Fieldcrest* and *Ward's Pride* have improved quality while more or less maintaining prices at 1941 levels.

In the face of all these changes, the properties which make a bath towel good remain unaltered. A good towel should have adequate drying ability and should be long wearing. To dry well, it must be soft and fluffy—the yarns should not have too much twist and the weave should not be too tight. On the other hand, the yarns should be twisted sufficiently to resist tearing, and the weave should be tight enough so that the terry loops will not pull out easily.

In short, a bath towel should strike a balance in yarn and weave which will make for a maximum of both absorption and strength.

Bath (or turkish) toweling is woven on a special loom which forms loops on both sides of the towel. Three sets of yarn are used: two warp (lengthwise) and one filling (crosswise). One of the warp yarns (the "ground") together

● Your new 1942 Buying Guide is no bookshelf ornament. Despite its 384 pages, its compact size makes it convenient for your pocket or handbag. Carry it with you when you shop; your Buying Guide was made to work for you.

with the filling makes up the base weave of the towel; the other warp yarn (the "pile") forms the terry loops.

These loops should be plentiful and well anchored to the base weave. Feeling a towel will give indication of the thickness of the pile. But heaviness in a towel doesn't necessarily mean high quality. Heaviness may be produced by a superabundance of pile with insufficient base weave for anchorage. A lighter towel made up of more numerous yarns has better strength than a heavier towel which lacks adequate anchorage for the terry loops.

Most of the towels tested had an equal number of pile and ground warp yarns; but some had twice as many pile as ground warps. Again, some had two-ply yarns as the ground warp while others had one-ply. All had single-ply filling yarns.

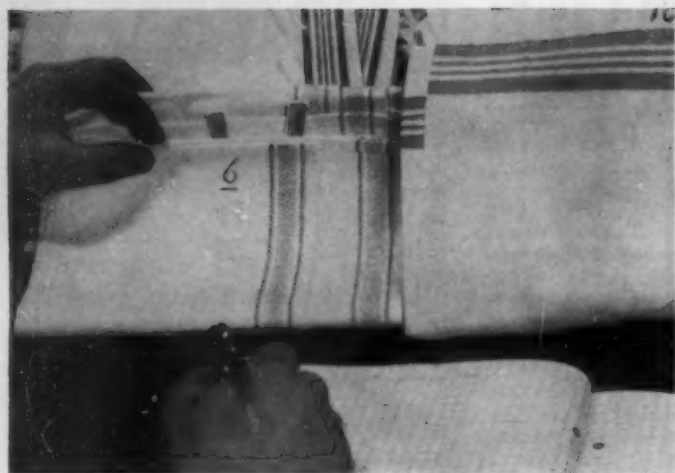
Inasmuch as the lasting quality of the towel depends considerably on the resistance of the pile warps to pulling out, a strong, evenly balanced towel with a two-ply ground warp is a better towel. The precise way in which the towel is made up, however, sometimes alters these simple rules; and it is such differences which make the buying of towels, or any textile, so difficult.

#### TELLING ABOUT A TOWEL

You can tell something about the balance of a towel in the store by holding the towel up to the light. An unbalanced towel (without the proper proportion of base weave to loops) will allow light to come through in gaps and splotches. A tightly woven, evenly balanced towel will filter the light in even pin points. Besides being abundant, the pile should be even, for scattered loops which stand out beyond others will tend to catch and pull out in washing.

But the essential strength and durability of a towel, or any other textile fabric, is not always disclosed by simple examination. The size of the loops, the twist of the yarn, the quality of the cotton used—these and other considerations enter into the total picture. Because they do, laboratory tests are necessary to find out how the total picture adds up.

Absorbing capacity and warp tensile strength—the latter a determining factor in the holding power of the weave—were given special weight in CU's tests. The number of loops per square inch—which helps determine absorption—received slightly less consideration. Tensile strength of the filling, thread count, weight and shrinkage were also carefully considered in final ratings. None of the towels shrank excessively and none were sufficiently short of the size given on the



**1** Towels are entered in laboratory notebook to begin typical textile project. Code numbers are substituted for names



**2** Sample pieces for specific tests are chopped out of towels. Standard dies are used to give even and consistent sizes

label (though not all towels actually measured up to it) to warrant lowering ratings on either count.

In addition to good balance of weave, a bath towel should have sufficient selvages on both sides. In the selvage the filling threads are turned and woven through warp threads which have been packed extra tight. This process produces an edge which gives extra support against pulling. For cheaper towels fabric is generally woven twice the width of the finished product, cut down the center and hemmed on one side. No matter how firmly the seam is stitched, it cannot be as strong as a good selvage.

Most bath towels are made of cotton; all of the towels tested by CU were. But other fibers are used to some extent. In some towels the pile or loop is made of linen. These are called friction towels, because of the relative harshness of the linen. Cotton friction towels or "gym towels," in which the terry pile is arranged in alternating lines to give a rougher surface, are also available.

The towel market goes below and above the medium price range which was covered in the test. But the greatest volume of sales is in this range and CU feels that the greatest economy is represented here, too.

Towels selling below 35¢ usually have small terry loops, insufficient ground warps for proper anchorage of the loops, or have one end hemmed, not selvaged.

At prices above 65¢ towels generally have more loops more firmly anchored to the base weave. But these towels are in the luxury class—poor buys if you are concerned with economy.

Monograms and color, as well as fancy designs, are features also found in higher-priced towels. In some cases a colored towel will have lower absorption than a white towel with the same con-

struction, since some of the absorbing capacity of the yarn is taken up by the dye. When buying colored towels make sure they will stand up under the kind of washing a towel requires—that is, hot water and soap. It is wise to get written guarantees of such washability.

All of the towels tested by CU were white, with or without colored borders, all of which were washable. Two samples of each brand were tested.

### Best Buy

*The following towel of the "Acceptable" list is judged to offer the best value for the money. For full details see listing under "Acceptable."*

**Gimbel's Gramercy.** 39¢.

### Acceptable

*(In order of quality without regard to price)*

**Hale Bros. Iron Thread** (Hale Bros., San Francisco). 49¢. 22x44 in. Single loop towel with two 2-ply ground warps after each loop.

**AMC Regent** (Associated Merchandising

Corp., NYC).<sup>1</sup> 59¢. 22½x43 in. Single loop towel with a 2-ply ground warp after each loop.

**Gimbel's Gramercy** (Gimbel Bros., NYC). 39¢. 21½x43½ in. Single loop towel with two 2-ply ground warps after each set of loops (one on each side of the towel).

**Macy's Mayflower** (R. H. Macy & Co., NYC). 44¢. 21½x45 in. Single loop towel with a 2-ply ground warp after each loop.

**AMC Ambassador** (Associated Merchandising Corp.).<sup>1</sup> 49¢. 22x45½ in.; 65¢. 25x51½ in. Single loop towel with a 2-ply ground warp after each loop.

**Fieldcrest** (Marshall Field & Co., Chicago). Available from Cooperative Distributors, 114 East 16th Street, NYC, for 49¢ plus postage, if ordered by mail. 22½x43 in. Single loop towel with a 2-ply ground warp after each loop.

**Moor** (Mooresville Cotton Mills, Mooresville, N. C.). 38¢. 22½x44½ in. Single loop towel with a 1-ply ground warp after each set of loops (one on each side of the towel).

**Gimbel's Toughie** (made by Wellington Sears Co., NYC; makers of *Martex* towels). 79¢. 24½x46½ in. Single loop towel with a 2-ply ground warp after each loop.

**Cannon Gym Towel** (Cannon Mills, Inc., NYC). 60¢. 23x46½ in. Ribbed towel made by three sets of double loops with a 1-ply binder after each set on the face, and the same on the back.

**Ward's Pride** Cat. No.—9321 (Montgomery Ward). 37¢ plus postage. 21½x42½ in. Single loop towel with a 2-ply ground warp after each loop.

**Cannon** (Cannon Mills, Inc., NYC). 49¢. 22x44 in. Single loop towel with two 1-ply ground warps after each set of loops.

**Dundee** (Georgia Kincaid Mills, Griffin, Ga.). 50¢. 22½x44½ in. Single loop towel with a 2-ply ground warp after each loop.

**Sears' Morning Glow** Cat. No.—8060M (Sears-Roebuck). 35¢ plus postage. 22½x46½ in. Single loop towel with a 1-ply ground warp after each loop.

<sup>1</sup> See page 11 of your 1942 *Buying Guide* for a list of AMC stores.

OF THE 13 brands of bath towels rated here, 10 were tested a year ago. The new tests show that, as compared to last year:

Three towels cost about the same while quality has improved: *Fieldcrest*, *Gimbel's Gramercy*, *Ward's Pride*.

Two towels cost about the same and quality is about the same, too: *Moor*, *Sears' Morning Glow*.

Three towels cost more while quality is about the same: *AMC Ambassador*, *Hale Bros. Iron Thread*, *Macy's Mayflower*.

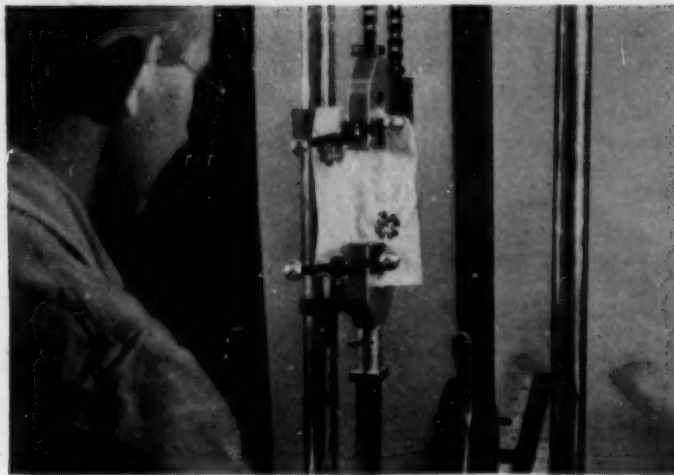
One towel costs about the same and is much lower in quality: *Dundee*.

One towel costs much more and is much lower in quality: *Cannon Gym*.





**3** Fabric being tested for thread count. Technician gets accurate reading from magnifying glass plus etched ruler



**4** Strength of fabric is determined by standard tensile strength machine, operated electrically to pull cloth apart

## FACE TOWELS

**T**O FULFILL its purpose, a face towel, like all towels, must be both strong and absorbent. And it must combine these features in such a manner that neither one is sacrificed for the other. To produce extra absorbing quality without excessively affecting strength, bath towels have terry loops, dish towels have loose yarns and weaves, while face towels utilize one of several special types of weaves—huck, crash, waffle, damask or cambric.

Most common of these weaves is the huck, which appears as a dotted, geometric design with a slightly rough surface. It is this rough surface which gives the towel its absorbent quality. Huck towels are made of either linen or cotton, but seldom of mixtures of the two. Linen huck has a luxurious appearance and good drying and wearing qualities, but is relatively expensive. The cheaper huck towels made of cotton have good appearance and do a satisfactory drying job.

Crash, often used for guest towels, derives its absorbing quality from the unevenness of the weave: the filling (crosswise) yarns are coarser and less tightly twisted than the warp (lengthwise) yarns. Crash towels are made of linen, cotton, or combinations of linen and cotton, linen and rayon, or cotton and rayon.

As with huck towels, linen crash produces a good, but expensive towel. Cotton and linen mixtures or just plain cotton crash towels do a satisfactory job of drying and, being considerably less expensive, are better buys. Rayon crash towels are satisfactory in every respect

except that they become weak when wet.

Waffle weave towels (their name describes their appearance) are generally made of cotton; they are good, utilitarian towels. Damask and cambric weaves make especially attractive, but less effective towels.

Because cotton huck towels are most popular and economical, CU limited its tests to them, except for one huck with a damask design and one waffle weave towel chosen to provide comparison.

Face towels should have selvages along both sides of the towel. Toweling which has been woven double width, then cut down the center and hemmed on one side won't wear as well as a towel with two selvages; the hem provides an additional edge which may open and ravel. End hems should be firmly sewn with close even stitches and back stitched to prevent raveling.

CU tested from four to six samples of each brand for resistance to abrasion, absorption, tensile strength, count and weight. Penalties were given to towels shrinking more than 5%.

### Best Buys

*The following towels of the "Acceptable" list are judged to offer the best value for the money, in order of quality. For full details see listing under "Acceptable."*

**Boott Wipe Dry.** 10¢.

**Cannon Waffle Weave.** 10¢.

### Acceptable

*(In order of quality without regard to price)*

**Boott** (Boott Mills, Lowell, Mass.). 29¢; 6 for \$1.50. 18x33 in. Heavy huck towel slightly larger and of slightly better con-

struction than **Boott Wipe Dry** listed below. But difference in price did not show up in equal difference in quality.

**Boott Wipe Dry** (Boott Mills). 10¢; 6 for 59¢. Labeled 16½x34½ in. but measured 17x31½ in.; samples purchased at Kress stores, not labeled for size, measured only 15½x30½ in. Quality slightly lower than that of **Boott** towel listed directly above. **Sears'** Cat. No.—8293M (Sears-Roebuck). 35¢ plus postage. 18x32½ in. Huck towel with damask design. Had high thread count and strength but comparatively low absorption.

**Cannon Waffle Weave** (Cannon Mills, Inc., NYC). 10¢. 16½x29½ in. Had high absorption but comparatively low resistance to abrasion.

**Fieldcrest** (Marshall Field & Co., Chicago). Available from Cooperative Distributors, 114 East 16th Street, NYC, 4 for 88¢ plus postage, if ordered by mail. 18x34 in. Larger than **Fieldcrest** towel listed below but similar in quality.

**Ward's** Cat. No.—9330 (Montgomery Ward). 4 for 39¢ plus postage. 16½x31½ in. Smaller than Cat. No.—9338 listed below but similar in quality.

**Cannon** (Cannon Mills, Inc.; purchased in W. T. Grant store). 10¢. 16½x22 in. Larger than **Cannon** towel listed below, and had better absorption and resistance to shrinkage.

**Fieldcrest** (Marshall Field & Co.). 19¢. Available from Cooperative Distributors, 4 for 66¢ plus postage, if ordered by mail. 16x32 in. Smaller than **Fieldcrest** listed above but similar in quality.

**Ward's** Cat. No.—9338 (Montgomery Ward). 4 for 49¢ plus postage. 18x37½ in. Larger than Cat. No.—9330 listed above but similar in quality.

**Ward's** Cat. No.—9340 (Montgomery Ward). 4 for 75¢ plus postage. 18x34 in.

**Sears'** Cat. No.—8606 (Sears-Roebuck). 12¢ plus postage. 18x35 in. Had higher absorption than **Sears'** towel listed above.

**Cannon** (Cannon Mills, Inc.). 10¢. 14x20½ in. Smaller than **Cannon** towel listed above with less absorption and higher shrinkage.



**5** Resistance to abrasion is calculated by wear as recorded on this machine. Vacuum attachment minimizes error



**6** Weight is determined by weighing 2" x 4" samples on analytical balance and calculating to ounces per square yard

## DISHCLOTHS

**A**ROUND 70 million dish, wiping and scrubbing cloths are produced in the U.S. each year. That means about two cloths to each family. But a lot of families probably have never seen a commercial dishcloth, for an old towel or used sugar sack can be made to do the job quite adequately.

It can, because the requirements for a satisfactory dishcloth are not very demanding. Any cloth large enough to give an adequate rubbing surface, absorbent enough to pick up water from surfaces to be dried (as for wiping off table tops) and strong enough to resist easy tearing in use or after hard laundering, makes a good dishcloth. What leads people to buy commercial dishcloths at all is their better appearance and low cost.

At the present time, however, consumers might give some special thought to the possibility of using old rags and cloths instead. Every year about 10 million square yards of cotton fabric go into production of the commercial cloths, and a good part of this might well be diverted to more essential use. Though there is no present shortage of cotton, every step toward conservation of national resources is worthwhile.

You can pay from 3½¢ to 20¢ for a dishcloth, according to CU's market survey of readily available brands. Cloths in the 7¢ to 10¢ range are generally the best buys, for laboratory tests showed that they tend to last as long as the more expensive cloths.

Many dishcloths are made with a leno weave; that is, the two warp (lengthwise) yarns cross each other between each filling (crosswise) yarn, so as to

help prevent slippage of the threads. Only the most expensive cloth tested had double warp yarns; less expensive ones had single warp. The expensive cloths are woven tighter, which tends to make them keep their shape longer. Which isn't very important in a dishcloth.

Besides the leno weaves, dishcloths are made in waffle weaves, openwork knits and other fancy patterns. You can probably get these weaves throughout the whole price range.

CU tested six samples of each dishcloth for resistance to abrasion, weight and bursting strength. Because all cloths had good absorbing capacities, this factor was not considered in the ratings. Many cloths tested had been made double width, then cut down the center and hemmed. In towels this feature is a serious drawback, but with dishcloths there is less strain to cause the hem to open and the cloth to unravel.

### Best Buys

*The following dishcloths of the "Acceptable list are judged to offer the best value for the money, in the order given. For full details see listing under "Acceptable."*

**Cannon.** Sold by Montgomery Ward as Cat. No.—9390, 7¢ plus postage.

**Ritz.** 10¢.

**Fieldcrest.** 3 for 25¢.

**Brownie.** 15¢. \$1.59 per dozen.

### Acceptable

*(In order of quality without regard to price)*

**Ritz** (J. Ritzenthaler, NYC). 20¢. 16x17 in. Leno weave. Two-ply double warp yarns.

**Ritz** (J. Ritzenthaler). 10¢. 14x14½ in. Fancy weave. Tight warp and less tightly twisted filling yarns for absorption.

**Brownie** (Brownie Products, NYC). 15¢. \$1.59 per dozen. 15x16 in. Fancy weave.

**Cannon** (Cannon Mills, Inc., NYC). Sold by Montgomery Ward as Cat. No.—9390, 7¢ plus postage. 15x15 in. Leno weave. Firmly twisted yarn.

**Fieldcrest** (Marshall Field & Co., Chicago). Sold by Cooperative Distributors, 114 E. 16th Street, NYC, 3 for 25¢ plus postage, if ordered by mail. 14x15 in. Fancy weave.

**Ritz** (J. Ritzenthaler). 18¢. 15x15 in. Waffle weave. Tightly woven.

**Cannon Utility** (Cannon Mills, Inc., NYC). 5¢. 15x15 in. Waffle weave. Loosely woven.

**Patex** (Patex Fibre Corp., Midland Park, N. J.). 11¢, 6 for 59¢. 15x16 in. Fancy weave. Tightly woven.

**Hanson Jumbo** (Hanson Textile Co., Hatfield, Pa.). 10¢. 16½x19½ in. Knit cloth.

**Cannon** (Cannon Mills, Inc.). Sold by Sears-Roebuck as Cat. No.—8613, 6 for 39¢ plus postage. 16x16½ in. Leno weave.

**Cannon** (Cannon Mills, Inc.). Sold by Montgomery Ward as Cat. No.—9393, 4¢ plus postage. 16x16 in. Leno weave.

**Cannon** (Cannon Mills, Inc.). 4¢. 15½x15½ in. Leno weave.

**Cannon** (Cannon Mills, Inc.). Sold by Sears-Roebuck as Cat. No.—8612, 4¢ plus postage. 14½x16 in. Leno weave.

**Cannon** (Cannon Mills, Inc.). 5¢. 14½x17 in. Openwork knit made to resemble leno weave.

**Cannon** (Cannon Mills, Inc.). 10¢. 17x17½ in. Openwork knit.

**Cannon** (Cannon Mills, Inc.). 6 for 39¢. 15x16 in. Leno weave.

**Hanson** (Hanson Textile Co.). 5¢. 16x16½ in. Openwork knit made to resemble leno weave.

**Hanson** (Hanson Textile Co.). 3 for 10¢. 14x14 in. Openwork knit made to resemble leno weave. Smaller and less firmly made than *Hanson* cloth listed directly above.



# DISH TOWELS

CU's TESTS show that there are decided differences in quality between various brands and types of dish towels, differences reflected in durability and in efficiency for the work they have to do.

To begin with, a dish towel should be strong, made from long staple, good quality yarn, and should be firmly woven with lightly twisted yarns. On the other hand, if it's too tightly woven, it won't be sufficiently absorbent—a definite drawback for dish towels.

In addition to these utilitarian requirements, a housewife wants her dish towels to be attractive, perhaps to match a color scheme. This means that if a towel has colored borders, stripes or figures, these should be colorfast—fast in spite of the hard laundering treatment that dish towels require.

Dish towels are made of linen, cotton, or mixtures of cotton and linen, or cotton, linen and rayon. Most expensive, linen towels are strong and lint free, because of the long fibers used. And they are highly absorbent. Only their high price prevents wider use.

Towels made of plain cotton or cotton and linen combined are cheaper and, for all practical purposes, are better buys. Cotton is strong, satisfactorily absorbent and produces almost as good an appearance as linen. The shorter staple cotton fibers tend to shed more lint than linen does, but not a great amount at that.

Since cotton and combination cotton-linen dish towels are most widely sold, CU limited its tests to these types. Rayon combination towels aren't good buys, because rayon becomes weak when wet.

## THE MEANING OF "LINEN"

Unfortunately for the consumer, manufacturers are under no legal compulsion to state the amount of linen present in mixed cotton and linen towels. Most such towels tested by CU were labeled merely "cotton and linen" or "part linen." According to trade regulations, towels so labeled should contain at least 5% linen. This amount, however, won't give the towel any of the characteristics of linen. And some of the "part linen" towels tested contained even less.

If you want part-linen towels, you will be wise to stick to towels with labels declaring at least 25% linen content. This is the minimum requirement if the towel is to have any of the characteristics of linen. CU found that the content of "25% linen" towels tested varied from 20% to 30%.

If you're particularly fussy about having your glassware glistening and absolutely free from lint, get a glass towel. These are made of linen, cotton, cotton and linen, or mixtures of cotton, linen and rayon, closely woven with extra tightly twisted yarns. Though not as absorbent as ordinary dish towels, glass towels produce a higher polish and leave less lint than ordinary cotton towels. Dry your glassware first with an ordinary towel and then use the glass towel to give it a final polish.

Since glass towels seldom become wet, rayon mixtures are quite satisfactory for them. But care must be used in washing rayon towels; hot water, wringing, or the use of soap with builders will weaken the fibers.

Most dish towels when new contain some sort of finishing or sizing which should be washed out before the towel is used. Towels with large amounts of sizing will come back from the laundry looking like rags. In general, not more than about 2% to 3% of sizing is desirable. To test for sizing rub a towel against itself; if powder falls off, there's probably too much sizing present.

Some types of finishes won't show up in this test, but will come out in the wash. It's therefore wise to get from the salesman some assurance as to the amount of finish present and to insist on returning the towel if it loses its firmness in the wash.

Low quality dish towels are often woven double width, cut down the middle and hemmed along one side. This hem may open so that the fabric unravels. Much superior are towels with tight selvages along each side. End hems should be firmly sewn with tight stitches; there should be no free fabric ends, and they should be backstitched to prevent raveling.

Besides the common woven towels, you can get knitted dish towels which more closely resemble dishcloths than towels. Highly absorbent, these knitted towels dry dishes quickly, leave very little lint, are very strong. Knitted dish towels were not included in CU's general tests on dish towels, but one brand, *Spongy*, examined for purposes of comparison, was found to be entirely satisfactory.

To be clean, fresh and sanitary, dish towels should be washed every day. Use hot water with plenty of suds for cottons or linens. Rinse well and, if possible, hang in the sun to dry. Beware of towels sold with washing instructions which recommend mild soap, warm water, and a warm, not hot, iron. It probably means that the fabric and colors won't stand up under the hard laundering necessary to get dish towels clean.

## THE TESTS

Four to six samples of each towel were tested for tensile strength, resistance to abrasion, weight, thread count, absorbing capacity, shrinkage, amount of sizing. Claims for linen content were checked. Ratings were based on all

7 Typed technical report being checked against laboratory notebook as one part of pre-publication checking. Essentially the same procedure outlined in the seven pictures on this and preceding pages is followed in most textile testing projects

these factors, with special weight placed on resistance to abrasion and absorbing capacity.

## Best Buys

The following dish towels of the "Acceptable" list are judged to offer the best value for the money. For full details see listing under "Acceptable."

**Boott Drywell.** 6 for 60¢.  
**Fieldcrest Kwik Wipe.** 6 for 89¢.

## Acceptable

(In order of quality without regard to price)

**Martex Standard** (Wellington-Sears, NYC). 6 for 92¢. 17x34 in.

**Fieldcrest Kwik Wipe** (Marshall Field & Co., Chicago). 6 for 89¢. Available from Cooperative Distributors, 114 East 16th Street, NYC, 6 for 84¢ plus postage, if ordered by mail. 16x32 in.

**Startex** (Startex Mills, Inc., Tucapau, S. C.). 6 for 90¢. 17x32 in.

**Fieldcrest East-Dri** (Marshall Field & Co.). 6 for 89¢. 16x32 in.

**Cannon Checks** (Cannon Mills, Inc., NYC). 6 for \$1. 18x32 in.

**Sears' Callaway** Cat. No.—8618 (Sears-Roebuck). 6 for 84¢ plus postage. 17½x33.

**Martex Dry-Me-Dry** (Wellington-Sears). 6 for \$1.50. 17½x34 in.

**Startex** (Startex Mills, Inc.). 6 for \$1.79. 17½x33 in.

**Cannon** (Cannon Mills, Inc.). 6 for 90¢. 17x32 in.

**Boott Drywell** (Boott Mills, Lowell, Mass.). 6 for 60¢. 16½x31 in. Best of the 10¢ towels tested.

**Startex Super-Dri** (Startex Mills, Inc.). 6 for 99¢. 18x34½ in. Labeled 75% cotton, 25% linen.

**Cannon** (Cannon Mills, Inc.). 6 for 60¢. 16½x31 in.

**Patex** (Patex Fibre Corp., Midland Park, N. J.). 6 for \$1. 19x32½ in.

**Sears' Cat. No.—8660** (Sears-Roebuck). 6 for 60¢ plus postage. Labeled 25% linen.

**Cannon Dryfast** (Cannon Mills, Inc.). Sold by Montgomery Ward as Cat. No.—9357, 6 for 49¢ plus postage. 16x31 in. Had selvage on one side only.

**Cannon Dryfast** (Cannon Mills, Inc.). 6 for 60¢. 16x28 in. Had selvage on one side only. Had same name as towel described directly above; different in construction.

**Startex Rainbow Stripe** (Startex Mills, Inc.). 6 for 60¢. 16x30 in. Had excess of finishing material.

**Sears' Cat. No.—8644** (Sears-Roebuck). 6 for 30¢ plus postage. 16x28½ in. Had excess of finishing material.

The following cotton knit towel is rated separately because it differed from the woven towels in construction.

## Acceptable

**Spongy** (Wright Mills, Philadelphia). 6 for \$1.20. Available at F. W. Woolworth Stores. 16x36 in. Had satisfactory strength, was highly absorbent and left no more lint than woven cotton towels.

# SHEETS

SINCE Consumers Union last reported on sheets (January 1941 Reports), retail prices have gone up as much as 46%. The average price rise in the sheets tested by CU is 22.8% for muslin and 14.8% for percales. And in no case has the price fallen below last year's figure—though two brands, *Gimbel's Graymoor* and *Marshall Field's Duracale*, cost no more than they did in January 1941.

Quality has in general remained more or less the same.

These quality changes, together with changes in price, have altered some of the ratings given in 1941. In muslin sheets, *Ward's Treasure Chest* and *Sears' Guest Chamber* displace last year's *Fruit of the Loom* and *Penney's Nation-Wide* as "Best Buys." Among the percales, *Ward's DeLuxe Percale* and *Macy's Percale* remain "Best Buys," while another *Ward's* sheet—*Superfine*—becomes one. Another 1941 percale "Best Buy," *Pequot*, loses out this year because of a slight lowering of quality accompanied by a relatively large increase in price.

The ASTM (American Society for Testing Materials) has published tentative standards for six different grades of sheeting. The industry has not accepted these designations and, while they manufacture sheets which correspond in thread count to four of the designations, they do not sell them as such, but rather sell them under different brand names.

Under such circumstances CU has utilized thread count to designate the grades of sheets tested. These grades are noted in the ratings.

Aside from personal preference as to the kind of sheet you like to sleep on, the important distinctions between percales and muslins are wearability and cost. The first cost of percales is high; but their lighter weight means—if you pay for laundry by the pound—a lower upkeep cost.

As for wear, a heavy muslin will usually outlast any other kind of sheet. However, the margin of lasting power of muslin over a good percale is not too great. Taking initial cost, laundry cost, wear, weight and comfort into consideration, percales may prove a better buy—if you can afford the initial cost.

Whatever kind of sheet you buy, it should have the following characteristics:

1. The weave should be tight and firm.
2. The sheet should have good resistance to abrasion.
3. It should have a reasonably high tensile strength.
4. It should be practically free of sizing which will come out in laundering.

5. It should not shrink more than 5%.
6. It should be torn rather than cut.

The average sheet label doesn't give you all this information. But sheets meeting the above requirements are available; and CU's rating of 49 brands, based on laboratory tests just completed, provides a guide to finding them.

## QUALITY AND WHAT MAKES IT

Thread count determines the "hand" or feel of the fabric. In good sheets the count is about the same for both warp (lengthwise) yarns and filling (crosswise) yarns. The percales, made of finer and more numerous yarns, have an average count of 90 to 110 in the warp and 85 to 105 in the filling. The muslins, with heavier and less numerous threads, have an average count of 70 to 80 in the warp and 60 to 70 in the filling.

You can see something of the balance of the weave by holding the sheet up to the light. But it's better to know the exact count, especially when you are trying to decide between two sheets. Unfortunately, very few labels tell.

The difference in weight between the lightest and the heaviest sheets tested by CU was 1 8/10 ounces per square yard, which amounts to about ¾ of a pound for a double bed sheet. The muslins weighed 4 to 5¼ ounces per square yard while the percales weighed 3½ to 4 ounces.

Make sure, with lightweight sheets, that the lightness is due to fine yarns set closely together rather than to sleazy construction. Any sheet lighter than 3½ ounces per square yard is almost certain to be sleazy and will not last long.

Smooth finish and heavy feel is sometimes due to excessive sizing, which usually comes out in the first laundering. Most of the sheets tested by CU had a negligible amount of sizing present. Excessive sizing is found in cheaper sheets sold as "competition items" and can generally be detected by rubbing the fabric against itself. If a powdery material falls out, there's too much sizing.

Sheets with weaving imperfections should be marked "seconds" and sold as such at lower prices, as should so-called "run-of-the-mill" sheets. Just how much damage is permissible in a second depends upon the mill, since no government or trade standards have been set.

A second with a minor flaw which will not affect wearability may be an economical buy; for example, a second with oil stains or mend marks (providing there are not too many of the latter). But do not buy seconds with missing yarns,



gashes, mildew stains, frayed selvages.

Some sheets have extra threads woven into the selvage to make them stand up better under strain. The actual value of these threads is speculative, inasmuch as it is the filling yarns which usually go first. Sheets should have at least a quarter-inch selvage on each side. The hems on either end should be firmly sewn with even straight-line stitching. Hemstitched hems look well, but they won't last long.

Like most other textiles which are laundered in hot water with bleaches, sheets receive their greatest wear in the laundering process. And if they are to stand up under the strain, good initial tensile strength and resistance to abrasion are needed. Sheets should have a minimum tensile strength of 45 pounds in the warp and 35 pounds in the filling. All of the sheets tested by CU were satisfactory in this respect.

Because there are no standard abrasion machines for testing sheets, there are no

standards for resistance to abrasion. CU's abrasion tests were made with one of the latest types of machines with modifications made by CU's technical staff to give more stable readings.

#### THE RATINGS

In CU's ratings tensile strength and resistance to abrasion were given most emphasis, but weight, thread count, amount of sizing, shrinkage in washing were also considered.

The sheets rated are described as heavyweight or medium weight muslins and as high count or percale. High count muslins are listed among the percales because manufacturers sell them as such.

These terms, which indicate the grades in which manufacturers make their sheets, are given for your convenience. However, in marketing sheets manufacturers differentiate between grades by means of brand names rather than by the above terms.

Unless otherwise noted, sheets are the 81x108 inch torn size before hemming.

#### MUSLINS

##### Best Buys

The following sheets of the "Acceptable" list are judged to offer the best value for the money, in the order given. For full details see listing under "Acceptable."

**Ward's Treasure Chest.** \$1.24 plus postage.  
**Sears' Guest Chamber.** \$1.24 plus postage.

##### Acceptable

(In order of quality without regard to price)

**Ward's Treasure Chest** Cat. No.—9869 (Montgomery Ward). \$1.24 plus postage. Heavyweight muslin.

**Macy's Mayflower** (R. H. Macy & Co., Inc., NYC). \$1.56. 81x103½ in. size. Heavyweight muslin.

**Nashua Indian Head** (Nashua Mfg. Co., Boston). \$1.69. Heavyweight muslin.

**Sears' Guest Chamber** Cat. No.—1957 (Sears-Roebuck). \$1.24 plus postage. Heavyweight muslin.

**Fruit of the Loom Extra Weight** (Fruit of the Loom, Inc., Providence, R. I.). \$1.84. Heavyweight muslin.

**Utica** (Utica & Mohawk Cotton Mills, Inc., Utica, N. Y.). \$1.89. Heavyweight muslin.

**AMC Ambassador** (Associated Merchandising Corp., NYC). \$1.85. Heavyweight.

**Pequot** (Pequot Mills, Salem, Mass.). \$1.84. Heavyweight muslin.

**Golden Gate** (Marshall Field & Co., Chicago). \$1.69. Heavyweight muslin.

**Lady Pepperell** (Pepperell Mfg. Co., Boston). \$1.94. Heavyweight muslin.

**Hale's Castle** (Hale Bros., San Francisco). \$1.85. Heavyweight muslin.

**Cannon** (Cannon Mills, Inc., NYC). \$1.39. Medium weight muslin.

**Gimbel's Gramercy** (Gimbel Bros., NYC). \$1.94. Heavyweight muslin.

**Penco** (J. C. Penney Co., NYC). \$1.49. Heavyweight muslin.

**Macy's Muslin** (R. H. Macy & Co., Inc.). \$1.21. Medium weight muslin.

**Peerless Tavern** (J. P. Stevens & Co., NYC). \$1.59. Heavyweight muslin.

**Hale's Iron Thread** (Hale Bros.). \$1.29. Medium weight muslin.

**Fruit of the Loom Colonial Dame** (Fruit of the Loom, Inc.). \$1.59. Medium weight.

**Sears' Launderite** Cat. No.—1739 (Sears-Roebuck). Catalog price, \$1.02. Price has since been raised to \$1.12 plus postage. Medium weight muslin.

**Pacific Mills Truth** (Pacific Mills, NYC). \$1.69. Medium weight muslin.

**Penney's Nation-Wide** (J. C. Penney Co.). \$1.19. Medium weight muslin.

**AMC Consul** (Associated Merchandising Corp.). \$1.54. Medium weight muslin.

**Wearwell** (Marshall Field & Co.). 94¢. 54x99 in. size. Medium weight muslin.

**Gimbel's Greeley** (Gimbel Bros.). \$1.49. Medium weight muslin.

<sup>1</sup> For list of AMC stores, see page 11 of 1942 Buying Guide.

## Results of Tests on 49 Brands of Sheets

(Order is alphabetical)

BRAND	PRICE MARKED (\$)	MARKED SIZE	WEIGHT (OZ.) PER SQ. YARD	TENSILE STRENGTH		THREAD COUNT		RESISTANCE TO ABRASION
				Warp	Filling	Warp	Filling	
MUSLIN								
AMC AMBASSADOR	1.85	81x108	5.1	65	70	76	66	Good
AMC CONSUL	1.54	81x108	4.3	63	62	71	60	Good
BULLOCK'S SLEEPER	1.60	81x108	4.2	54	48	71	59	Fair
CANNON	1.39	81x108	4.6	61	66	69	62	Good
FRUIT OF THE LOOM								
COLONIAL DAME	1.59	81x108	4.3	60	55	71	60	Good
FRUIT OF THE LOOM								
EXTRA WEIGHT	1.84	81x108	4.9	74	77	74	69	Good
GIMBEL'S GRAMERCY	1.94	81x108	4.8	65	71	76	64	Good
GIMBEL'S GREELEY	1.49	81x108	4.1	58	53	71	57	Good
GOLDEN GATE	1.69	81x108	4.7	69	69	74	69	Good
HALE'S CASTLE	1.85	D B <sup>1</sup>	4.7	65	70	76	63	Good
HALE'S IRON THREAD	1.29	81x110	4.5	57	68	72	61	Good
LADY PEPPERELL	1.94	81x108	4.6	66	73	74	72	Fair
MACY'S MAYFLOWER	1.56	81x103½	4.8	79	73	74	72	Excellent
MACY'S MUSLIN	1.21	81x108	4.6	64	61	71	60	Good
NASHUA INDIAN HEAD	1.69	81x108	5.0	77	74	75	70	Excellent
PACIFIC MILLS TRUTH	1.69	81x108	4.4	61	66	70	61	Good
PEERLESS TAVERN	1.59	81x108	4.2	62	57	76	67	Good
PENCO	1.49	81x108	4.8	65	74	75	66	Good
PENNEY'S NATION-WIDE	1.19	81x108	4.6	51	53	70	60	Good
PEQUOT	1.84	81x108	4.6	74	72	76	67	Good
SEARS' GUEST CHAMBER	1.24	81x108	5.3	72	70	74	68	Excellent
SEARS' LAUNDERITE	1.12	81x108	4.5	58	52	70	61	Good
UTICA	1.89	81x108	4.7	72	69	76	66	Good
WARD'S LONGWEAR	1.02	81x108	4.5	50	50	71	62	Fair
WARD'S TREASURE CHEST	1.24	81x108	5.2	74	78	78	69	Excellent
WEARWELL	0.94	54x99	4.2	66	47	70	60	Fair
PERCALE								
AMC AIMCEE	1.54	90x108	3.7	55	49	92	91	Fair
AMC REGENT	3.75	90x108	4.0	66	71	104	100	Excellent
BULLOCK'S BEL AIR	2.30	81x108	4.0	65	59	94	92	Good
CANNON	1.94	81x108	3.9	59	60	95	90	Good
CANNON FINE PERCALE	3.20	81x108	3.8	63	62	104	101	Good
DURACALE	1.89	90x108	3.9	55	57	94	88	Fair
FRUIT OF THE LOOM CAMEO	1.99	81x108	3.7	50	53	95	88	Good
GIMBEL'S GABRIELLE	1.94	81x108	4.0	53	53	92	91	Fair
GIMBEL'S GREYMOOR	3.25	90x108	3.9	61	65	105	99	Good
HALE'S POPPY	1.85	74x108	3.7	57	51	98	90	Good
MACY'S PERCALE	1.46	81x108	3.6	61	58	95	87	Good
MACY'S SUPREMACY	3.49	81x108	3.9	60	60	106	102	Good
MOHAWK PERCALE	1.94	81x108	3.9	60	53	95	88	Good
NASHUA INDIAN MAIDEN	2.30	90x108	3.8	58	56	96	87	Good
PACIFIC	1.89	90x108	3.8	52	59	92	88	Fair
PENNEY'S PERCALE	1.98	81x108	3.5	56	61	100	86	Fair
PEPPERELL PEERLESS	3.30	81x108	3.9	61	65	104	97	Good
PEPPERELL PRINCESS	2.84	90x108	3.8	63	58	102	102	Excellent
PEQUOT PERCALE	2.10	81x108	3.9	60	60	97	92	Good
UTICA PERCALE	2.99	81x108	4.1	72	76	105	103	Excellent
WAMSUTTA SUPERCALE	4.45	81x108	3.9	67	66	105	102	Excellent
WARD'S DELUXE PERCALE	1.64	81x108	4.0	64	62	96	86	Excellent
WARD'S SUPERFINE	2.49	90x108	3.7	74	61	104	103	Good

<sup>1</sup> Double bed.

**Ward's Longwear** Cat. No.—9834 (Montgomery Ward). \$1.02 plus postage. Medium weight muslin.  
**Bullock's Sleeper** (Bullock's, Los Angeles). \$1.60. Medium weight muslin.

## PERCALES

### Best Buys

The following sheets of the "Acceptable" list are judged to offer the best value for the money, in the order given. For details see listing under "Acceptable."

**Ward's DeLuxe Percalé.** Catalog price, \$1.49. Price raised to \$1.64 plus postage.  
**Ward's Superfine.** \$2.49 plus postage.  
**Macy's Percalé.** \$1.46.

### Acceptable

(In order of quality without regard to price)

**Utica Percalé** (Utica & Mohawk Cotton Mills, Inc., Utica, N. Y.). \$2.99. Percalé.  
**AMC Regent** (Associated Merchandising Corp., NYC).<sup>1</sup> \$3.25. \$3.75 for 90x108 in. size. Percalé.  
**Wamsutta Supercalé** (Wamsutta Mills, New Bedford, Mass.). \$4.45. Percalé.  
**Ward's Superfine** Cat. No.—9979 (Montgomery Ward). \$2.49 plus postage. 90x108 in. size. Percalé.  
**Ward's DeLuxe Percalé** Cat. No.—9943 (Montgomery Ward). Catalog price, \$1.49. Price has since been raised to \$1.64 plus postage. High count.  
**Pepperell Princess** (Pepperell Mfg. Co., Boston). \$2.84. 90x108 in. size. Percalé.  
**Gimbel's Greymoor** (Gimbel Bros., NYC).<sup>2</sup> \$3.25. 90x108 in. size. Percalé.  
**Macy's Supremacy** (R. H. Macy & Co., Inc., NYC). \$2.49. Percalé.  
**Cannon Fine Percalé** (Cannon Mills, Inc., NYC). \$3.20. Percalé.  
**Pepperell Peeress** (Pepperell Mfg. Co.). \$3.30. Percalé.  
**Pequot Percalé** (Pequot Mills, Salem, Mass.). \$2.10. High count.  
**Bullock's Bel Air** (Bullock's, Los Angeles). \$2.30. High count.  
**Macy's Percalé** (R. H. Macy & Co., Inc.). \$1.46. High count.  
**Mohawk Percalé** (Utica & Mohawk Cotton Mills, Inc.). \$1.94. High count.  
**Hale's Poppy** (Hale Bros., San Francisco). \$1.85. 74x108 in. size. High count.  
**Nashua Indian Maiden** (Nashua Mfg. Co., Boston). \$2.30. 90x108 in. High count.  
**Cannon** (Cannon Mills, Inc.). \$1.94. High count.  
**Penney's Pencalé** (J. C. Penney Co., NYC). \$1.98. High count.  
**Gimbel's Gabrielle** (Gimbel Bros.). \$1.94. High count.  
**Duracalé** (Marshall Field & Co., Chicago). \$1.89. 90x108 in. size. High count.  
**Pacific** (Pacific Mills, NYC). \$1.89. 90x108 in. size. High count.  
**Fruit of the Loom Cameo** (Fruit of the Loom, Inc., Providence, R. I.). \$1.99. High count.  
**AMC Aimcee** (Associated Merchandising Corp., NYC).<sup>1</sup> \$1.54. 90x108 in. size. High count.

# Mechanical Pencils

When you pay very much for one, most of your money is going for jewelry of a sort. So far as the works go, 25¢ will bring you about as much pencil as \$2. Here are ratings of some 60 leading models and some general buying guidance

FOR \$2 or \$3 you can get a mechanical pencil which will be a stylish addition to anybody's vest pocket. But as far as the works are concerned, you won't be getting any more pencil for your money than if you spent a quarter. CU's laboratory tests and examinations of some 60 models showed that, except with a few automatics, the mechanisms and operation of these pencils differed hardly at all.

This doesn't quite mean that a \$2 pencil is worth no more than a 25¢ one. There are certain decorative and style features on the more expensive models which add to their value. What it does mean is that when you pay very much for a mechanical pencil, most of the money is going for jewelry of a sort.

Probably the most important feature of a mechanical pencil is the "movement"—the mechanism that pushes the lead back and forth. And except for the automatic (repeater) and *Autopoint* pencils, practically all the products on the market use one of two movements.

Neither type seems to possess any outstanding advantages over the other. With each type you can have "front action" (turning the writing tip of the pencil pushes the lead back and forth) or "rear action" (the eraser end regulates the lead). Or the barrel of the pencil may be divided in half, and the lead moved by turning one-half of the barrel. Which action you choose should depend mainly on your personal preference, though, by and large, front action pencils are not quite so easy to operate.

Each mechanical pencil is made to take a certain length and thickness of lead. Most pencils use one of the standard lengths: 1 $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. or 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. or 4-in.; *Eberhard Faber*, however, uses a 2-in. lead. 1 $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. and 4-in. sizes are available in both standard thickness and in thin leads; the other sizes are available only in the thin.

Whether you choose a pencil using regular or thin leads, or long or short, again should depend on your personal preference, and on the work you want the pencil to do. Thin leads permit finer work, but they break more easily. Pencils using short leads must be reloaded frequently, which may be annoying. With short leads, however, a pencil can have a large maga-

zine capacity without an increase in its thickness.

If you don't object to thickness, you can get a pencil using a 4-in. lead with a magazine capacity of as many as 12 leads.

CU's examinations showed considerable variation among different samples of the same brand and model. Consequently, you should examine any pencil carefully before you buy it—whether you're paying 10¢ or \$2. Choose a pencil which measures up well on the following points:

1. There should be no "play" in the movement. With the lead extended to writing position, press against the point of the lead and notice if there is any back and forward movement of the lead.

2. The lead should fit snugly within the metal tip.

3. The clutch in the movement should hold the lead firmly. Pull on the lead to see if it does. Make sure the pencil propels and repels the lead satisfactorily.

4. The pencil should expel the lead completely, otherwise the metal tip may become clogged. On some of the more expensive pencils the tip is removable, which makes for easy cleaning in case the lead does jam.

5. The magazine should be readily accessible, so that you can load and unload it with no difficulty.

6. The eraser, too, should be accessible and should fit firmly in its holder.

7. The movement should operate easily. Sometimes pencils with front action movement are hard to turn because of the limited gripping surface on the metal tip.

8. It is highly advantageous if the movement permits a little "slippage." That is, when the movement is turned to either the extreme propel or repel position, there should be some leeway so that it won't be injured (in some cases it is broken) if it is turned too far.

With good care, a mechanical pencil should last for many years. Some of the more expensive brands are guaranteed. *Eversharp* used to advertise that its pencils were "guaranteed not for years, not for life, but guaranteed forever." The Federal Trade Commission decided last September, however, that this statement was on the excessive side. A complaint



was issued and now *Eversharp* is explaining that its guarantee means *Eversharp* pencils will be repaired or replaced whenever necessary for a flat charge of 35¢.

Most of the 25¢ and 50¢ pencils rated below are available at 5- & 10-cent stores or at stationery stores.

In rating mechanical pencils the following factors were considered: movement, tip, length of lead, capacity and convenience of magazine, ease of operation. Appearance and style were not taken into consideration. One to five samples of each model were tested.

## Mechanical Pencils

### Best Buys

The following pencils of the "Acceptable" list are judged to offer the best value for the money, in order of quality. For details see listing under "Acceptable."

**Wearever** No. 344C. 20¢ to 25¢.

**Leeds**. 25¢.

**American**. 25¢.

**American Superthin**. 25¢.

### Acceptable

(In order of quality without regard to price)

**Parker Duo-Fold** Model 713 (Parker Pen Co., NYC). \$2. Removable tip. Used 2½-in. thin lead. Magazine capacity, 12 leads. A well-designed pencil; gold-filled tip and clip.

**Waterman** (L. E. Waterman Co., Newark, N. J.). \$1.25. Removable tip. Used 2½-in. thin lead. Magazine capacity, 12 leads.

**Dixon Rite-Rite Viewpoint** No. 100 (Rite-Rite Mfg. Co., Chicago). \$1. Removable tip. Used 2½-in. thin lead. Magazine capacity, 12 leads. Had a long, tapered point.

**Schaeffer's** Model FLE (W. A. Schaeffer Pen Co., Ft. Madison, Iowa). \$2.50. Used 2½-in. thin lead. Magazine capacity, 6 leads. More an item of jewelry than a pencil; partly gold-filled barrel. Even considering its appearance, it is overpriced, like most pencils in this price class.

**Dixon Rite-Rite** (Rite-Rite Mfg. Co.). 49¢. Essentially the same pencil as *Dixon Rite-Rite Viewpoint* No. 100 listed above, except for tip. Used same leads and had same magazine capacity. A much better value than the *Viewpoint*.

**Schaeffer's Fineline** (W. A. Schaeffer Pen Co.). \$1. Removable tip. Used 2½-in. thin lead. Magazine capacity, 6 leads. Well-designed pencil with gold-filled clip and tip. Identical with *Schaeffer's* Model FLE, except it didn't have a partly gold-filled barrel. A much better value than Model FLE.

**Parker DeLuxe** Model 927 (Parker Pen Co.). \$1.50. Removable tip. Used 1½-in. thin lead, and is therefore inferior to

*Parker Duo-Fold* Model 713. Magazine capacity, 12 leads. Gold-filled tip and clip.

**Wearever** No. 344C (Wearever Pencil Co., NYC). 20¢ to 25¢. Available from Montgomery Ward as Cat. No.—7635, 21¢ plus postage. Used 4-in. thick lead. Magazine capacity, 12 leads. Transparent plastic barrel. Convenient, because of long leads and large capacity for extra leads. Sold with magazine full of extra leads.

**Leeds** (distrib., Schulte's Cigar Stores). 25¢. Essentially the same as the *Wearever* No. 344C and apparently made by the Wearever Pencil Co. for Schulte.

**American** (American Lead Pencil Co., Hoboken, N. J.). 25¢. Used 4-in. thick lead. Magazine capacity, 12 leads. Transparent barrel.

**American Superthin** (American Lead Pencil Co.). 25¢ with 7 extra leads and 3 extra erasers. Available from Sears-Roebuck as Cat. No.—7842, 23¢ plus postage with extra leads, but no extra erasers. Used 4-in. thin lead. Magazine capacity, 6 leads.

**American Blackbird** (American Lead Pencil Co.). 29¢. Used 2-in. thin lead. Magazine capacity, 24 leads.

**Eberhard Faber** (Eberhard Faber Co., Brooklyn, N. Y.). 50¢. Used 2-in. thin lead. Magazine capacity, 10 leads.

**Wearever** (Wearever Pencil Co.). Distributed by Montgomery Ward as Cat. No.—5588, 22¢ plus postage. Used 1½-in. thick lead. Magazine capacity, 18 leads.

**Eversharp Slim Jim** (The Wahl Co., Chicago). 49¢. Used 2½-in. thin lead. Magazine capacity, 6 leads. Magazine not so convenient to use.

**Permapoint** No. 137 (Eberhard Faber Co.). 10¢. 2-in. thin lead. Magazine capacity, 6 leads. Transparent plastic barrel.

**Penney's** (J. C. Penney Co.). 25¢. Used 1½-in. thick lead. Magazine capacity, 12 leads.

**Scripto** No. 71 and No. 70 (Scripto Mfg. Co., Atlanta, Ga.). 10¢. Used 4-in. thick lead. No magazine; "Acceptable" only if extra lead capacity is not an important consideration with you. No. 71 had transparent plastic barrel.

**Macy's** (R. H. Macy & Co., NYC). 29¢. Used 1½-in. thick lead. Magazine capacity, 48 leads.

**Eagle Chromatic** (Eagle Pencil Co., NYC). 10¢. 4-in. thick lead. No magazine; "Acceptable" only if extra lead capacity is not an important consideration with you.

**Velvet** (American Lead Pencil Co.). 10¢. 4-in. thick lead. No magazine; "Acceptable" only if extra lead capacity is not an important consideration with you. Available with barrels of various plastics, some transparent.

**Sears' Auto-Webster** Cat. No.—5766 (Sears-Roebuck). 69¢ plus postage. Used odd size (2½ in.) thin lead. Magazine capacity, 12 leads. Eraser unsatisfactory.

**Mongol** No. 36 (Eberhard Faber Co.). 10¢. Used 1½-in. thick lead. Magazine capacity, 23 leads.

**Autopoint** (Autopoint Co., Chicago). 75¢ for model using 1½-in. thick lead, with magazine capacity of 12 leads; 49¢ for model using 1½-in. thin lead, with magazine ca-

capacity of 16 leads. Neither repelled and both were difficult to load.

**Wearever Hairline** (Wearever Pencil Co.). 10¢. Used 2-in. thin lead. No magazine; "Acceptable" only if extra lead capacity is not an important consideration with you.

### Not Acceptable

The following pencils are rated "Not Acceptable" because the movements were easily ruined by turning the mechanism past the extreme repel position.

**Parker Writefine** (Parker Pen Co.). Available from Sears-Roebuck as Cat. No.—5764, \$1 plus postage.

**Eagle** No. 50 C (Eagle Pencil Co.). 50¢.

## Automatic Pencils

The "automatic" pencils listed below do not have the conventional screw feed movements. The lead is fed into the tip by pushing down on the eraser end of the pencil; and new leads are fed from the magazine automatically. All of the automatic pencils tested by CU performed satisfactorily, but some users report some difficulty with clogged mechanisms.

### Acceptable

(In estimated order of quality)

**Eversharp** No. 178 (The Wahl Co.). \$2.50. Used 1½-in. thin lead. Magazine capacity, 23 leads. Stainless steel barrel and tip; gold-filled clip. Inside mechanism easily removed for cleaning.

**Esterbrook** (Esterbrook Steel Pen Co., Camden, N. J.). \$1. Used 1½-in. thick lead. Magazine capacity, 18 leads. Inside mechanism easily removed for cleaning.

**Eversharp** 181 (The Wahl Co.). \$1. Essentially the same pencil as the \$2.50 *Eversharp* listed above except for barrel.

**Schaeffer's** (W. A. Schaeffer Pen Co.). \$1. Used 2½-in. thin lead. Magazine capacity, 18 leads.

## Multiple-Color Pencil

The following pencil is a special type containing from two to four movements, each with a different color lead. It is "Acceptable" only for persons who find this feature a particular convenience.

### Acceptable

**Norma** (Norma Multikolor Co., NYC). \$1.50 (for 2-color pencil) and up. Used 1¾-in. thick lead. Magazine capacity, 18 leads. Thick. Performance quite satisfactory for the purpose.



## AIR RAID

*Some pointers on how (and how not) to get ready*

**W**ITH THE United States at war, the possibility of air raids is present for the people of many communities. The first rule for these people is to cooperate to the fullest extent with local authorities conducting the air raid drills and blackout practices. Worst rule is to rush out and buy up "blackout" equipment which will probably never be needed. You'll be helping national defense far more if you use, in so far as possible, articles which you already have.

In regions away from sea coasts, blackouts, if any, probably will be short and rare. Most people will have no need whatsoever to buy special blackout curtains. For short periods of time you can simply keep your lights turned off. If the blackout lasts long, you can turn on the lights in one room—after covering the windows completely with heavy blankets, bedspreads or rugs. These don't have to be black, but they should be dark.

If you live near the coast, especially in a region with important defense industries or military posts, it is well to have your plans made for blackouts. Right now, set aside one room to which you can go during an air attack. Figure out how to cover the windows of this room with heavy, dark blankets, bedspreads or rugs, or with black drapery. Coated materials like oilcloth make exceedingly opaque shades, but require careful handling to prevent cracking.

There are certain everyday articles which you should keep in this room ready for use in a blackout. Some of these articles you may have on hand

already. If you don't it would probably be wise to buy them.

### FLASHLIGHTS

For one thing, you should have ready a flashlight in good working order, filled with fresh batteries. If this means buying a flashlight, try to get the focusing type which can be adjusted to produce both a long distance beam and a short distance, widely spread light. You can then use your flashlight either as a dim lamp (if the electric current is shut off) or to pick out not-too-distant objects, indoors and outdoors.

Moreover, get a full-sized model, about the diameter of a 50¢ piece and long enough to hold two batteries. Further refinements such as a shatter-proof glass and a place to carry an extra bulb are desirable.

To be sure they're fresh, buy dated flashlight batteries which haven't passed the expiration date. The present manufacturing practice is to date batteries twelve months ahead. Consequently, a battery whose guarantee date is just expiring will be shorter-lived than an equivalent battery dated twelve months from when you buy it.

According to tests made by CU in March 1941, the "Best Buy" in flashlight batteries at that time was *Sears' Shurlite* Cat. No.—4654. Though not listed in the Winter catalog, it can be bought at Sears-Roebuck stores for 5¢. The four highest quality flashlights tested were *Sears' Powermaster Armor-Clad* Cat. No.—4650; *Ward's Leak-Proof* Cat. No.—

4728, both 9¢ plus postage (store price, 10¢); *Ray-O-Vac Leak-Proof* No. 2LP (Ray-O-Vac Co., Madison, Wis.), 10¢; and *Burgess Uni-Cel* No. 2 (Burgess Battery Co., Freeport, Ill.), 10¢.

### RADIOS

Though CU has always advised against buying portable radios for use in the home, because of their slight volume and comparatively poor tone quality, this advice does not hold in regard to blackouts. For once the electric current is turned off, a portable radio may afford the only means of receiving any important instructions and news flashes that may be broadcast. The outstanding argument against buying a portable radio now (besides the expense involved) is that it soon may be extremely difficult to get portable radio batteries. If you do buy a portable radio, get some extra batteries at the same time if you can afford the extra outlay. They may deteriorate somewhat, but at least you'll have them.

If you intend to use your radio only in the house, buy a standard size portable. These have more volume and better tone quality than the smaller "personals." However, if you want a radio to carry around with you wherever you go, indoors and out, you'll probably find a "personal" model more convenient.

In CU's last tests on portable radios (July 1941) the "Best Buys" in standard size models were, in order of preference: *Emerson* Model 427 (Emerson Radio & Phonograph Corp., NYC), \$24.95; *Motorola* Model 61L (Galvin Mfg. Corp., Chicago), \$34.95; *Admiral* Model 78-P6 (Continental Radio & Television Corp., Chicago), \$29.95; and *Emerson* Model 424, \$29.95.

The "Best Buys" in personal portables were, in order of preference: *Sentinel* Model 227 (Electrical Research Laboratories, Inc., Evanston, Ill.), \$19.95; *Zenith* Model 4K600 (Zenith Radio Corp., Chicago), \$22.95; *Firestone* Cat. No.—S7397-1 (sold by stores of Firestone Tire & Rubber Co., Akron, O.), \$21.45; and *Fada* Model C34 (Fada Radio & Electrical Corp., Long Island City, N. Y.), \$24.35. All prices are list prices prevailing in October 1941.

If an acute shortage of portable radio batteries develops, you may have to take any brand you can get. But try to get batteries which haven't passed the expiration date marked on them.

In tests made by CU in July 1941 the three highest quality "B" batteries were found to be *Ward's Supreme Quality* Cat. No.—4949, \$1.19 plus postage; *Eveready* No. 762 (National Carbon Co., NYC), \$1.50; and *Eveready Mini-Max* No. 482, \$1.50. The highest quality "A"

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batteries were *Sears' Silvertone* Cat. No. —5089, 38¢ plus postage; *Ward's Supreme Quality* Cat. No.—5021, 39¢ plus postage; *Eveready* No. 742, 60¢; and *Burgess* No. 4F, 50¢.

Personal portables use flashlight cells as "A" batteries and, in most cases, the *Eveready Mini-Max* No. 467 (\$2.25) as "B" batteries.

#### FIRST AID

Indispensable for a blackout room (and a good thing to have in the house anyway) is a first aid kit. Get a metal box (such as fishermen use) or a canvas roll and place in it the following equipment:

Two packages each of 1-inch and 2-inch roller bandages; sterile gauze squares, about 3x3 inches, in individual packages; a box of *Band-Aids* or similar bandages; a roll of 2-inch adhesive tape.

Two large triangular cloths suitable for use as tourniquets or for tying splints.

One ounce of 2% iodine and two fluid ounces of aromatic spirits of ammonia, both in rubber-stoppered bottles.

One large tube of ointment for burns (such as *Amertan* or *Metanolic Jelly*).

Castor oil or mineral oil for use in eyes (keep in small tubes).

Scissors; a 3-inch forceps for removing splinters; six thin board splints; a paper of 2-inch safety pins; a strong jack-knife of the Boy Scout type; paper cups.

Try to learn the elements of simple first aid, and with the first-aid equipment, keep a copy of the American Red Cross First Aid text book. Don't buy ready-made kits put out by surgical supply houses unless you check to see that they contain the proper materials; many don't. The materials, purchased individually, shouldn't cost more than about \$4, metal box included.

#### OTHER PRECAUTIONS

Pilot lights left burning during air raids constitute serious fire hazards. And since pilot lights in many stoves and gas refrigerators can't be turned off by homeowners in an emergency, it's a good idea to have a serviceman disconnect the pilot light right now.

Finally, in your preparations don't forget to lay in a supply of books, cards, games, &c. to provide entertainment during blackouts. This may sound like a trifling measure to take in an emergency, but it's not.

Remember that air raids, especially the kind that would be attempted in the United States, are not so much directed at killing people or destroying military objectives as at crushing morale. The more steps you take to maintain that morale, the better.

## Winter Motor Oils

*You can cut fuel costs and protect your engine by using the right kind of oil. This report, based on laboratory tests, will help you choose*

**"GIVE Your Car A Fresh Start Every Thousand Miles"** is an advertising slogan well gauged to increase oil companies' sales. But it's deliberately misleading advice for motorists.

If you switch from Summer to Winter oil each Fall and back to Summer oil in the Spring, that about takes care of necessary complete changes. And if you do only light driving in the Summer—no long stretches at high speed, no heavy loads—you may be able to avoid even these semi-annual changes by using light oil the year round.

Motor oils don't really "wear out." Some amounts are lost through leakage and vaporization, and the oil is also affected by sludge formation, dilution and dirt accumulation. But frequent oil changes—after every 1,000 miles—aren't much help in keeping clean oil in your engine, because oil begins to get "dirty" very soon after it's put into a car.

Most late model cars are equipped with oil filters, and you can have one installed if you own an older car. The filter helps to keep the oil clean and prevent sludge from collecting at the cylinders. Cleaning or replacement of filter elements may be required once or twice a year.

If your car doesn't have an oil filter, then it's probably wise to have the oil changed completely every 3,000 to 5,000 miles or so in addition to the seasonal changes.

The reason for changing oil at the beginning of each Winter and Summer is that cold and warm weather require different grades of oil. Any oil in any season must be thick enough at high engine temperatures to protect moving parts from excessive wear. It mustn't, however, be so thick that its own movement causes excessive friction, for then more effort is required to drive the engine and gasoline consumption is increased.

But Winter oils have to function at widely different temperatures. All oils tend to thicken in cold weather; and this thickness (viscosity) increases the effort required to turn the motor over after the car has been standing. If the oil is too thick, you may find yourself confronted with undue wear on the starter and even eventual battery breakdown. The obvious solution is to use a thin oil. But it can't be so thin that it fails

to provide a tough film at the highest temperature and load reached by the engine during operation.

In short, a good Winter oil must be a compromise: it must remain sufficiently thick at high temperatures to protect moving parts, and sufficiently thin at low temperatures to allow the engine to turn over and run with minimum effort.

Because SAE 10 and SAE 10W<sup>1</sup> oils have these properties, they're recommended for cold weather (SAE 10W is somewhat superior for use in extremely cold regions). SAE 20 and SAE 20W can also be used for most Winter driving, though they won't be as thin as the "10" oils at low temperatures. Some oil dealers believe that it will be more difficult to get 10W oils this Winter, because they are needed in the defense program.

Here are some suggestions for getting the best service from your oil during Winter driving:

1. When putting your car up for the night in very cold weather, stop the motor by pulling out the choke. (You can't do it, of course, if your car has automatic choke.) This floods the piston chamber, diluting the oil so that it won't be too thick when you start the engine the next morning.

2. You will find it easier to start a cold engine if you throw out the clutch before you step on the starter (don't just put the car in neutral). Throwing out the clutch disengages the transmission entirely and reduces drag on the starter.

3. Cold engines should never be raced immediately after they've been started. Cold oil doesn't circulate well; racing may damage the engine.

4. When having your car serviced during the Winter, make sure that the attendant gives you oil of the correct viscosity number. And whatever the time of year, don't let him sell you oil if your car doesn't need it; excess oil in the crankcase does no good, and causes some waste of oil. Keep oil at the middle level on the bayonet gauge.

5. Whether it's Winter or Summer, remember that oil consumption jumps

<sup>1</sup> SAE numbers refer to the standard viscosity designations established by the Society of Automotive Engineers and generally recognized in the petroleum industry.

sharply as the speed of your car passes 40 m.p.h. For instance, when speed is increased from 40 m.p.h. to 50 m.p.h. oil consumption increases fifty per cent. From 40 m.p.h. to 60 m.p.h. it increases about sixty-five per cent, and from 40 m.p.h. to 80 m.p.h., about seventy per cent.

Oils with paraffin bases are generally preferable to those with naphthene bases, because they have a higher viscosity index (that is, their rate of flow changes least as the temperature changes) and higher flash point (lowest temperature at which oil will ignite). But since most of the oils on the market are blends of various crudes, it's difficult to find a brand with all the characteristics of a pure base. Pennsylvania crude oils are higher in paraffin content than other crudes, but even they don't have entirely pure paraffin bases.

Manufacturers' claims to special refining processes and ingredients are nine times out of ten more sales talk than anything else. Higher-priced oils have not been shown to possess any advantages that can't be found in lower-priced oils. And CU's tests showed that price is no indicator of general quality, for good oils were found in the lowest-price group.

For this report on Winter oils CU tested only oils labeled either SAE 10 or SAE 10W or both. All the "Acceptable" oils, with one exception, met either 10 or 10W specifications, but only eight out of 26 qualified as both 10 and 10W oils. Many of the oils sold as both 10 and 10W were mislabeled, since they didn't meet 10W specifications. The SAE numbers given in the ratings are

those determined by CU's laboratory tests.

All of the 32 brands tested were purchased in 1-quart factory sealed cans, except *Co-op Blue Label*, *Co-op Red Label*, *Travelene* and *Belmont*, which came in 2-gallon cans. Few of the filling station oils are available in the large containers, but you may be able to arrange with your station to buy large quantities at a time and thereby get a discount. Unbranded bulk oils will be covered in future tests on Summer oils.

One to four samples of each brand of oil were tested for viscosity index, viscosity at 0° F., flash point, color number, specific gravity, net volume (no samples were found short in volume). In rating the oils, viscosity index was given greatest consideration.

### Best Buys

*The following oils of the "Acceptable" list are judged to offer the best value for the money, in the order given. For full details see listing under "Acceptable" below.*

**Travelene.** \$1.59 for a 2-gal. can; 20¢ per qt. SAE 10.

**Sears' Cross Country** Cat. No.—4501F. 20¢ plus transportation. SAE 10.

**Co-op Red Label.** \$1.49 for a 2-gal. can; 18.6¢ per qt. SAE 10.

**Co-op Blue Label.** \$1.10 for a 2-gal. can; 13.7¢ per qt. SAE 10.

### Acceptable

*(In order of quality without regard to price. Prices given are for quart cans, except where otherwise noted.)*

**Esso No. 1** (Standard Oil of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Louisiana). 35¢. SAE 10

and 10W. This brand should not be confused with the *Esso No. 1*, sold by the Colonial Beacon Oil Co., listed below.

**Gulflube** (Gulf Refining Co.). 25¢. SAE 10 and 10W.

**Mobiloil** (Socony-Vacuum Oil Co.). 30¢. SAE 10 and 10W.

**Travelene** (Strauss Stores Corp., NYC). \$1.59 for a 2-gal. can; 20¢ per qt. SAE 10.

**Atlantic** (Atlantic Refining Co.). 25¢. SAE 10 and 10W.

**Tydol** (Tide Water Associated Oil Co.). 25¢. SAE 10 and 10W.

**Quaker State** (Quaker State Oil Refining Corp.). 30¢. SAE 10.

**Gulfpriide** (Gulf Refining Co.). 35¢. SAE 10 and 10W.

**Sears' Cross Country** Cat. No.—4501F. (Sears-Roebuck). 20¢ plus transportation. SAE 10.

**Texaco** (The Texas Co.). 25¢. SAE 10 and 10W.

**Sinclair Pennsylvania** (Sinclair Refining Co.). 30¢. SAE 10 and 10W. Samples tested failed to show close uniformity.

**Essolube** (Colonial Beacon Oil Co.). 25¢. SAE 10.

**Co-op Red Label** (Eastern Co-operative Wholesale, Inc., NYC). \$1.49 for a 2-gal. can; 18.6¢ per qt. SAE 10.

**Shell X-100** (Shell Oil Co., Inc.). 35¢. SAE 10.

**Pennzoil** (Pennzoil Co., Inc.). 35¢. SAE 10.

**Kendall** (Kendall Refining Co.). 35¢. SAE 10.

**Ward's** Cat. No.—7355 (Montgomery Ward). 20¢ plus transportation. SAE 10.

**Co-op** (Consumers Co-operative Ass'n, North Kansas City, Mo.). 25¢. SAE 10.

**Co-op Blue Label** (Eastern Co-operative Wholesale, Inc., NYC). \$1.10 for a 2-gal. can; 13.7¢ per qt. SAE 10.

**Golden Shell** (Shell Oil Co., Inc.). 25¢. SAE 10.

**Koolmotor** (Cities Service Oil Co.). 35¢. SAE 10.

**Richfield** (Richfield Oil Corp. of N.Y.). 25¢. SAE 10W.

**Havoline** (Indian Refining Co.). 30¢. SAE 10.

**Amoco** (American Oil Co.). 25¢. SAE 10.

**Lubrite** (Socony-Vacuum Oil Co.). 25¢. SAE 10.

*The following brand was found to be a good oil of high viscosity index, but samples tested met SAE 20 and 20W specifications, not SAE 10 or 10W.*

**Esso No. 1** (Colonial Beacon Oil Co.). 35¢. SAE 20 and 20W.

### Not Acceptable

**Iso-Vis** (Standard Oil Co. of Indiana). 30¢. Had a fairly high viscosity index but an excessively low flash point, indicating kerosene dilution.

**Ring Free** (Macmillan Petroleum Corp.). 35¢. Low viscosity index. Had highest viscosity at 0° F. of all oils tested.

**Phillips 66** (Phillips Petroleum Co.). 30¢. Low viscosity index.

**Opaline** (Sinclair Refining Co.). 25¢. Low viscosity index.

**Belmont** (Strauss Stores Corp.). 96¢ for a 2-gal. can; 12¢ per qt. Low viscosity index and flash point. Met SAE 20 and 20W specifications, not SAE 10 as labeled.

**Sunoco** (Sun Oil Co.). 25¢. Very low viscosity index and flash point.



VISCOSITY TEST IN OPERATION

*Viscosity index, the most important characteristic of lubricating oils, is calculated from viscosities determined at 100° F. and 210° F. by means of the machine above*



# Sewing Machines

*The current models aren't greatly different from last year's . . . or those of 20 years ago. So don't be too eager to discard an old machine. With this caution, CU presents ratings of 29 models, both electric and treadle, together with some buying advice*

**E**XCEPT for a few minor improvements and refinements, the sewing machine is essentially the same today as it was a generation ago. Changes in recent years—hinged presser-foot, reverse sewing mechanism, and the like—haven't done much more than make some types of sewing more convenient.

If you feel that these features will help you in your sewing tasks, your money may be well spent for a new machine. But don't be too eager to discard your old one while it's doing a competent job.

Above all, don't let persuasive salesmen make you think your old treadle machine is completely outdated, and must be replaced by a new electric model. Likewise, when you buy a new machine, don't assume that an electric model is the only kind to be considered. If you've had some sewing experience and ordinarily do a fair amount of sewing, the additional \$20 to \$40 for an electric machine will probably be well spent. But for occasional sewing a treadle machine should prove entirely adequate. Moreover, for about \$10 to \$15 you can buy an electric motor and have it attached.

If you wish, you can spend a considerable sum of money and get your sewing machine in a smart cabinet. But you can usually get exactly the same sewing head without the furniture for much less. For instance, the *Singer* Model 201 lists at \$129 in a portable (just the sewing head cabinet) but at \$196 in the desk-style cabinet. Whether you want to spend the extra \$67 is up to you.

Sewing machines are not especially complicated mechanisms; there are relatively few points that you need to know when you buy one. Two general types, the chain-stitch and the lock-stitch, cover the field. The chain-stitch machine uses a single thread, forming it into a series of interlaced loops resembling a chain. The mechanism is simpler than that of the lock-stitch type; there is no bobbin to wind, the thread tension is regulated automatically. But it's more expensive and it doesn't lend itself well to certain types of sewing, such as darning, shirring and tucking. And stitches made on this



type of machine tend to unravel easily.

The lock-stitch machine—nearly all domestic-made machines are of this type—uses two threads, one on top feeding from the spool and one underneath feeding from the bobbin, to form an interlocking stitch. There are three varieties of the lock-stitch machine, each distinguished by its bobbin or shuttle design.

## VARIETIES OF LOCK-STITCH

In the *long-shuttle* variety the under thread, wound on a bobbin, is carried by a shuttle through a loop formed by the upper thread; the needle pushes the loop through the cloth and a stitch is produced. Then the shuttle carries the under thread back to its starting point and the process is repeated. Because of the “shuttling” action, these machines produce considerable noise and vibration, which make them unsuitable for use with an electric motor. But long-shuttle machines do a perfectly satisfactory job.

In the *rotary* machine, the thread-moving mechanism is a circular piece of steel which rotates around a stationary bobbin. This steel ring has a hook which catches the under thread and passes it through a loop in the upper thread to form a stitch. Since the motion is continuous in one direction, operation is quiet and vibrationless; electric opera-

tion is consequently best suited to this kind of machine.

Something of a half-way step between the long-shuttle and the rotary is the *oscillating-shuttle* machine. Like the rotary, it has a steel ring to move the thread; but, as in long-shuttle machines, the ring swings back and forth instead of moving continuously in one direction. While there is some noise and vibration, the oscillating machine can be operated satisfactorily with electric drive. Both the rotary and the oscillating types are known as “round-bobbin” machines.

In sewing, both threads—upper and lower—must be kept taut; the “tensions” on a sewing machine do this. The tension for the lower thread is on the bobbin case, in the form of a flat metal spring under which the thread passes. Turning a screw adjusts this tension. The upper thread tension, on older machines, is a flat piece of metal on top of the arm, under which the thread passes. Newer machines have a pair of discs to carry the thread. In both cases the tension is adjusted by a thumb screw.

All machines provide some means of regulating the length of stitch, usually a knob or lever on the side of the sewing head. In new models the stitch regulator is marked to indicate the number of stitches per inch. This eliminates the necessity of sewing a sample of material, as you make adjustments, to see if the stitch size is what you want.

One of the most highly touted features on new machines is reverse-sewing action, which permits you to stitch backwards. The feature has been overrated. It does help considerably in darning and is something of a convenience in any type of sewing, but unless you've had considerable experience and have much sewing to do, the extra cost of the reversing feature is usually not warranted. With a little practice, you can learn to do a good job of darning on a regular machine.

Most new machines have hinged presser-feet. The hinged foot automatically adjusts to different thicknesses of material; you don't have to regulate its height above the sewing surface as you do with the rigid presser-foot. Salesmen stress the advantages of the hinged foot in selling new machines, but most old machines can have it put on them.

For pleating, tucking, shirring and certain other special types of sewing, the attachments accompanying practically all machines do a very good job—if you take the trouble to learn how to use them. The same can't be said about hemstitching attachments. A few salesmen use them as a big talking point for selling their brand (all brands have them). But hemstitching attachments can be used on very few materials, and then only with fair success. You'll probably be

better satisfied if you have your hem-stitching done by professionals.

Electric sewing machines have the motors mounted so that the machine is driven by either a belt or friction drive, or they have built-in motors with gear drive. The friction drive is least desirable because it allows some slippage when the machine is started. Though more expensive, the gear drive is best; it permits no slippage and has the motor enclosed in a dust-proof case.

Practically all the sewing machines made in the U.S. are manufactured by one of four companies: Singer, White, National or New Home. All except Singer sell their machines under several brand names in addition to the company name. And in many cases, machines are sold under the private brand names of department stores. (Macy's in New York City sells one machine under three different names: *National*, *Eldredge* and *Macy's Red Star*.)

Obviously, CU can't rate all of these brands individually. But if you can find out which company manufactures a brand you're considering, you may be able to judge its quality from the ratings.

You can often buy machines at considerable savings from mail-order houses. It has been argued that these savings are canceled to some extent by lack of servicing facilities. CU has been informed, however, that prompt service is available from the mail-order houses through their retail stores. There are also independent servicemen who carry parts for all makes. But a good sewing machine, properly cared for, shouldn't need much servicing.

Since sewing machines haven't changed basically in the past years, a secondhand model, well constructed and designed and in good condition, is often a good buy. You can get used treadle machines from \$15 up, and electric machines from \$25 up. But all types are getting scarce.

Except for mail-order house brands, the list price of a sewing machine is usually not the price you have to pay. The final figure as a rule depends on your bargaining ability; you may be able to get 25% off or more. And you can usually get a trade-in allowance—whether you own an old machine or not.

The ratings below are based on the recommendations of CU's sewing machine consultants. Factors considered in rating the machines were construction and design of the sewing mechanism and, to some extent, presence of convenience features—easy tension, stitch size adjustment, &c.

Sewing machines will undoubtedly be affected by defense shortages. There has already been some curtailment of the supply, and prices are rapidly advancing.

## Electric Machines

### Best Buys

*The following machines of the "Acceptable" list are judged to offer the best value for the money, in the order given. For full details see listing under "Acceptable."*

**Sears' Franklin Rotary** Cat. No.—20185F, \$44.95 plus transportation; Cat. No.—21485M, \$74.95 plus transportation.

**White Rotary** Models 41 and 43. \$75 to \$124.50, list.

### Acceptable

*(In estimated order of quality without regard to price; prices given are list prices)*

**Singer Rotary** Model 201 (Singer Sewing Machine Co., NYC). \$129 (portable) to \$196 (desk-style cabinet). Highest quality machine on the market. Has all new refinements. Gear-driven by built-in motor. Very smooth and vibrationless operation. Well adapted to rapid operation by an experienced sewer. Heavy sales costs make *Singer* machines overpriced.

**White Rotary** Model 77 (White Sewing Machine Co., Cleveland). \$134 to \$160 (\$30 trade-in allowance offered locally). Not available in portable style. Second highest in quality. Has some features such as "pop-up" presser-foot release and individual regulators for forward and backward stitch, which are not available on other *White* models. For most users, this model is not worth the price difference over *White* Models 41 and 43.

**Domestic** (White Sewing Machine Co.). Same as *White* Model 77, and sold at same prices by many department stores.

**National Rotary** Model R-40 (National Sewing Machine Co., Belvidere, Ill.). \$79 (portable) to \$149 (desk-style cabinet). Has reversing mechanism and hinged presser-foot. Another model, essentially the same as R-40, but without reversing mechanism, is available at about \$8 less.

**Eldredge** Model R-40 (National Sewing Machine Co.). Same as *National Rotary* Model R-40, and sells for about the same price. This machine is sold by R. H. Macy & Co., NYC, under their own name.

**Sears' Franklin Rotary** (White Sewing Machine Co.; distributed by Sears-Roebuck). Cat. No.—20185F (portable), \$44.95 plus transportation; Cat. No.—21485M (desk-style cabinet), \$74.95 plus transportation. Choice of *Rotary* head or *De Luxe Rotary* head (\$8 additional) on all styles. Refinements on *De Luxe Rotary* head, such as reversing mechanism, hinged presser-foot, automatic bobbin wind, and general improved appearance, make it a better buy than the *Rotary* head if you do much sewing.

**Ward's** (National Sewing Machine Co.; distributed by Montgomery Ward). Cat. No.—A2161 (portable), \$47.95 plus transportation; Cat. No.—A1061 (desk-style cabinet), \$94.95 plus transportation. These models have all the features of *National*

*Rotary* Model R-40 listed above and because of their lower price are much better values for your money. Sewing head No. 2 (without reversing mechanism) is available in cheaper cabinets at \$8 less.

**Singer** Model 9913 (Singer Sewing Machine Co.). Sells for about \$13 less than *Singer* Model 201. Similar to 201 except that sewing mechanism is the oscillating type and is not so smooth in operation.

**White Rotary** Models 41 and 43 (White Sewing Machine Co.). Model 41, \$75 (portable); Model 43, \$82.50 (portable) to \$124.50 (desk-style cabinet). Mechanical and electrical details are same for both models, but Model 43 comes in slightly better cabinets. Both have latest refinements, such as reversing mechanism and hinged presser-foot. Because these models offer good value for the money, they are rated as "Best Buys." But the *White* machines sold by Sears-Roebuck—*Franklin Rotary* and *Kenmore* (sold in retail stores only)—are cheaper and therefore are better buys.

**Free Westinghouse De Luxe** Model ARE (New Home Sewing Machine Co., Rockford, Ill.). \$99.50 (portable) to \$180 (desk-style cabinet). Has all new improvements. Friction drive of improved type which minimizes slippage. Both top (needle) and bottom (feed and bobbin) mechanisms are gear-driven. Has "floating gib hook" which prevents threads from jamming around bobbin. This is also available in lightweight (#17) head of magnesium metal at same price.

**New Home** Model HR (New Home Sewing Machine Co.). Same as *Free Westinghouse* Model ARE, except for slightly different motor mounting, and sells for about the same price.

**Free Westinghouse** Model DA (New Home Sewing Machine Co.). Sells for about \$30 to \$40 less than Model ARE. Has many of ARE's features, including floating gib hook, but construction is inferior.

**New Home** Model AD (New Home Sewing Machine Co.). Same as *Free Westinghouse* Model DA; priced about the same.

### Not Acceptable

*The following electric machines are rated "Not Acceptable" because they have long shuttles. Although they will sew satisfactorily, excessive noise and vibration make their operation with electric drive unsatisfactory. The additional cost of a round bobbin machine is in most cases slight enough to make the purchase of an electric long-shuttle machine unwise.*

**Sears' Minnesota** Model E (White Sewing Machine Co.; distrib., Sears-Roebuck).

**Ward's Franklin Long-Shuttle** (White Sewing Machine Co.; distributed by Montgomery Ward).

**New Home Long-Shuttle Model LN Head** (New Home Sewing Machine Co.).

**Paveway and Paveway Regal** (National Sewing Machine Co.).

**Ward's** (National Sewing Machine Co.; distributed by Montgomery Ward). Choice of several long-shuttle heads.

**White Long-Shuttle** Model 8 (White Sewing Machine Co.).



## Treadle Machines

### Best Buys

The following machines of the "Acceptable" list are judged to offer the best value for the money, in the order given. For full details see listing under "Acceptable."

- Sears' Franklin Cat. No.—50852F. \$28.95 plus transportation.  
Sears' Franklin Cat. No.—50917F. \$40.95 plus transportation.  
Sears' Franklin Cat. No.—50923F. \$48.95 plus transportation.

### Acceptable

(In estimated order of quality without regard to price; prices given are list prices)

- White Model 113-135 (White Sewing Machine Co., Cleveland). \$90. A full rotary machine with all improvements.  
Sears' Franklin Cat. No.—50917F (White Sewing Machine Co.; distributed by Sears-Roebuck). \$40.95 plus transportation. Rotary head. For information on head, see comments on Franklin Rotary in ratings of electric machines.  
Sears' Franklin Cat. No.—50923F (White Sewing Machine Co.; distributed by Sears-Roebuck). \$48.95 plus transportation. De Luxe Rotary head. For information on head, see comments on Franklin Rotary in ratings of electric machines.  
Singer Model 66 (Singer Sewing Machine Co., NYC). \$95. Oscillating round bobbin sewing mechanism. Very good machine for treadle operation.  
New Home Rotary Model AAE (New Home Sewing Machine Co., Rockford, Ill.). \$90. Similar to electric Free Westinghouse Model ARE.  
Sears' Franklin Cat. No.—50852F (White Sewing Machine Co.; distributed by Sears-Roebuck). \$28.95 plus transportation. Long-shuttle head. With this machine outlay is entirely for the sewing head, not for furniture or "extras."  
New Home Long-Shuttle Model LN Head (New Home Sewing Machine Co.). \$10 less than New Home Rotary Model AAE. For the small price difference Model AAE is a much better buy.  
Ward's treadle machines with "No. 2 head." \$39.95 and up.

## Lightweight Portables

- Singer Model 221 (Singer Sewing Machine Co.). \$105. A true portable machine (weight, 11 lbs.) and very convenient for traveling. Very well built. It will do any type of sewing that a standard machine will do, but it's slower and not so convenient to use.  
Free Westinghouse (New Home Sewing Machine Co.). See listing of Free Westinghouse Model ARE above.

January, 1942

# MEDICAL SECTION

HAROLD AARON, M. D., SPECIAL MEDICAL ADVISER

MEDICAL CONSULTANTS: Dr. Anton J. Carlson—Chairman, Dep't of Physiology, University of Chicago; Past President, American Physiological Society; Dr. Theodor Rosebury—Assistant Professor of Bacteriology, College of Physicians & Surgeons, and School of Dental and Oral Surgery, Columbia University; Dr. Marion B. Sulzberger—Ass't Professor of Clinical Dermatology and Syphilology, New York Post-Graduate Medical School, Columbia University; Editor, *Journal of Investigative Dermatology*.

CU's Medical Consultants give technical advice on matters of medicine which lie within their fields. CU is responsible for all opinions concerning social, economic and public health questions.



## Mineral Oil Nose Drops

*Evidence accumulates that they are not only ineffective but dangerous. Because they are worthless for colds they should not be bought. Because they can cause death they should not be sold*

It is now five years since Consumers Union called attention to a type of pneumonia—called lipid pneumonia—caused by aspirating oily nose drops into the lungs.<sup>1</sup> Although this serious complication resulting from the use of nose drops had been known in medical circles since 1925, the warnings of CU were greeted with skepticism or hostility by many members of the medical profession, by some consumers and by advertisers of certain cold remedies. The attitude of the last was understandable since a very lucrative business was at stake. The reluctance of physicians and consumers to accept the conclusions, however, can be attributed to the inertia that any new idea has to overcome.

CU's campaign, pressed home in many succeeding issues of the *Reports*, bore its first major fruit in the N. Y. City Dep't of Health. Shortly after CU's first report appeared, the New York Commissioner of Health issued a public warning against the use of mineral oil nose drops and forbade their use in the city's health department clinics.

The timeliness of this step was underlined by the coincident appearance of fresh medical evidence about the harmful effects of nose drops. Numerous articles were published in the medical press indicating that the prevalence of lung complications was far greater than at first believed and, more important,

that normal healthy adults as well as sickly infants were susceptible to them.

Because the evidence is by now so overwhelmingly clear, because drug companies still sell oily nose drop preparations and because illusions about nasal medication for colds are still widely held, CU believes that a follow-up report is now necessary.

It should be noted that mineral oil nose drops are not the only cause of lipid pneumonia. The condition can also be caused by the entrance of other materials into the lungs. Many cases result from the combat over the daily dose of cod-liver oil, if the over-anxious mother forces the oil on the baby. Forcing an infant to take milk can also be disastrous.

But the public health significance of lipid pneumonia resulting from unadroit handling of infants is less important than that of the pneumonia resulting from the use of mineral oil nose drops. How many cases occur yearly it is impossible to state. Most of the cases reported in the medical literature now—over 200—have been diagnosed from examination of the tissues after death. But as Dr. Paul R. Cannon of the University of Chicago has stated<sup>2</sup>:

There are, no doubt, many more that have been overlooked or left unreported by pathologists. It is obvious that post mortem evidence alone can tell but little

<sup>1</sup> CU *Reports*, December 1936, and following issues.

<sup>2</sup> "The Problem of Lipid Pneumonia," *Journal American Medical Ass'n*, January 21, 1940. P. 2176.

# 



**ACT AT ONCE... To help Prevent  
Many Colds from Developing!**

At first warning sign of a cold, put Vicks Va-tro-nol up each nostril... this aids your natural defenses against colds... and helps prevent many colds from developing.

**3-PURPOSE MEDICINE.** Even when a head cold stuffs you up, or transient congestion clogs nose at night, Va-tro-nol does 3 important things to bring relief... (1) shrinks swollen membranes, (2) relieves irritation, (3) helps clear clogged nasal passages... And brings greater breathing comfort. Follow complete directions in folder.

**VICKS  
VA-TRO-NOL**

**WANT TO GET PNEUMONIA?**

*Vicks' nose drops won't prevent colds but they can make you sick... or cause your death*

about the incidence of many kinds of disease. This is important to bear in mind because many physicians feel that, as so few necropsy cases have been reported, lipid pneumonia is a rare disease. By such logic, however, one would have to conclude that many diseases are rare, as for example morphinism [morphine addiction], vitamin B deficiency or allergy. As the mild cases of lipid pneumonia are usually unsuspected, it is probably a more common malady than the nearly 200 cases which have been reported would indicate.

It is difficult to say in what proportion of cases lipid pneumonia is the direct cause of death and in what proportion it is responsible for acute or chronic disability. There is abundant evidence, however, that mineral oil nose drops are a serious health hazard, and that, even when they do not kill, they can affect the health of a vital organ and thus seriously undermine general health.

### 

The mechanism of this destructive process is simple. Because liquid petrolatum, albolene and mineral oil are light substances, they do not cause cough-

ing when they are sprayed or dropped into the nose. Instead, they pass through the glottis and are breathed or gravitate into the lung spaces. This is especially likely to happen during sleep if the oil has been used before retiring.

It is true that a considerable proportion of the oil that reaches the back of the throat or glottis is swallowed, but some may not be and long continued use eventually can lead to accumulation of considerable quantities of oil in the "alveolar" spaces of the lung. Mineral oils, unlike many vegetable oils, are not absorbed by the tissues so that the accumulation of oil may be so great as to produce tumors ("granuloma") of the lung. More often the oils set up acute and chronic inflammatory changes in the lung. And when the oil enters the lungs it may carry with it bacteria or viruses which will aggravate the tendency to inflammation or pneumonia.

Particularly severe are the chronic effects. Areas of scar tissue are formed which are just as destructive of the respiratory lining as acute pneumonia. In fact, the chronic effects are more common and are responsible for repeated attacks of so-called "chronic bronchitis" and "bronchiectasis." Thus a vicious circle is established. The nose drops are taken for a cold and cough. With repeated use a chronic cough develops. If it is associated with a nasal catarrh (as it so often is) more oil is dropped or sprayed to relieve the cough and more acute or chronic inflammation follows. Yet not a single manufacturer of mineral oil nose drops warns consumers as to the possible harm resulting from their excessive or habitual use.

The Vicks Company does state on the label of its product *Va-Tro-Nol* (incidentally in very small print) "Do not give to a struggling child, nor to anyone enfeebled or debilitated." This reluctant admission is of recent date, and nowhere—either on label, folder or in public advertising—is there warning by Vicks or other companies that *normal adults* can suffer ill effects from the use of oily nose drops.

On this point Dr. Cannon says:

The earlier reports on the occurrence of lipid pneumonia led to the belief that it is essentially a disease of infants and children. Accumulated evidence has proved, however, that it affects all ages, and at least 105 cases, most of which were discovered at necropsy [examination after death], have been reported in adults. The view, furthermore, that it occurs almost entirely in weakened individuals and particularly in those with defects of deglutition is no longer correct; it is now certain that healthy persons may develop severe types of lipid pneumonia, especially if they use medicated liquid petrolatum intranasally in large quantities over long periods of time.

Even in normal adults the oil may not cause the protective cough reflex that would expel the oil dropping into the lungs. As already explained the oil is too light to excite this protective mechanism. Furthermore, the menthol, camphor, eucalyptus and other aromatic oils contained in these preparations act as mild local anesthetics on the mucous membrane of the glottis and thus further lessen the tendency for the cough or gag reflex to prevent the entrance of oil into the lungs. *Mistol* and *Groves' Emulsified Nose Drops* contain chlorbutanol, a drug actually used by physicians as a local anesthetic.

### 

The dangers of mineral oil nose drops might be passed over with the cautions or warnings that attend the use of any valuable drug in medical practice. But mineral oil nose drops have so little proved value in the treatment of colds that there is no scientific justification for their use. There is plenty of justification for their banishment.

As has been repeatedly mentioned in the *Reports*, the congestion of the nose during a cold is only one symptom of an acute systemic infection that tends to run a brief course and clear up. The best treatment for the cold is rest. For the systemic infection, rest at home for at least one day. For the nose, it's a good idea to rest from forceful blowing, and rest from applications or sprays of irritating nose drops.

If the congestion is oppressive, 2 or 3 drops of a watery or isotonic saline solution of a vaso-constrictor drug such as ephedrine (1%), or neo-synephrin (1/4%) may be dropped into the nostrils.

But Dr. Cannon fears that "abandonment of this type of medication [mineral oil nose drops] will be slow because of the fact that so many persons have used oily nose drops with no apparent ill effects." Another important reason is that the advertising of this lethal agent is permitted in every type of public communication.

## 

*(All of the following brands of nose drops contained mineral oil.)*

**Pinoleum.**  
**Vicks' Va-Tro-Nol.**  
**Groves' Emulsified Nose Drops.**  
**Penetro Nose Drops.**  
**Mistol Drops with Ephedrine.**  
**Mistol Drops.**  
**Groves' Regular Nose Drops.**  
**Gimbel's Ephedrine Inhalant Compound.**  
**Macy's Nasal Drops** (with ephedrine).  
**Park Nose Drops.**

**CONSUMERS UNION Reports**



# GENERAL SECTION

## CONSUMER NEWS AND INFORMATION



### CU's Members Report

*How the membership answered the 1941 questionnaire on CU's work and policies*

"IN ORDER to guide the Board of Directors in its work, a questionnaire shall be prepared annually . . . and submitted to the membership for vote." Thus a provision in CU's bylaws.

The questionnaire for 1941 was mailed out to every CU member last May. And from every State came the answers—6000 of them. The work of tabulating and analyzing the returned questionnaires, begun in June, could not be completed until Fall. But within a week after the questionnaires were in, CU's staff had broken down the answers on a representative cross-section and was using the findings to guide its work.

That each CU member may know how the membership as a whole voted, a breakdown of the answers to each of the 10 questions is given below. In conformance with the answers, CU has already made several changes in its publications and policies.

#### THE REPORTS

Much to the gratification of the staff, returns showed that the great majority of members replying liked the make-up of the *Reports*. 62% approved of the balance of material in general. Even more, 87%, liked the style of writing; 3% found it too simple and 2% found it too involved. The proportion of photographs to text seemed right to 58% of the members, with most of the others voting for more photographs.

In indicating topics and types of material which they thought should be given more emphasis, members pretty much confirmed the proportions maintained in the *Reports* throughout the past year. 1941 preferences were generally the same as those of the membership last year and the year before. As usual, sentiment

was almost evenly divided between technical reports with brand ratings and general buying advice—27% wanted more reports with ratings; 25% wanted more buying advice.

Besides buying advice and technical reports, members wanted, in order of preference: (1) more medical and health articles; (2) more articles on problems of distribution, marketing tactics and consumer economics; (3) more articles on consumer legislation and the consumer movement; (4) more columns and features such as "Quote Without Comment" and "The Docket."

Since many members checked two or even four and five items which they wanted "more of," CU's staff came to the conclusion that members would like to have more of everything in the *Reports*. We wish it could be done. As we have pointed out before, there is only one way to get it done: the more new members CU gets, the more work it can do for all the members.

We wondered what members thought of the editorial statements on the work and purposes of CU which have been appearing on the inside cover of the *Reports*. We found that more than three out of five (69%) of the members replying liked them, thought they were interesting. Most of the rest put them in the

### ANNUAL QUESTIONNAIRE

"In order to guide the incoming Board of Directors in its work, a questionnaire shall be prepared annually by the Board of Directors and submitted to the membership for vote."—from CU's Bylaws.

Your careful cooperation in filling out and returning this questionnaire will be of great assistance in helping the directors and the staff of Consumer's Union serve the needs of the membership.

#### 1. CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

3554 a. ☐ I approve of the present balance of material in the *Reports*.

1646 b. ☐ I do not approve.

#### 2. IF YOU DO NOT APPROVE, CHECK BELOW THE TYPES OF MATERIAL YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE GIVEN MORE EMPHASIS:

1576 a. ☐ Technical reports, including brand ratings.

1468 b. ☐ General buying advice (as for food, furniture, house furnishings, etc.).

1066 c. ☐ Medical and health articles.

626 d. ☐ Articles on problems of distribution, marketing tactics, and consumer economics (as on grade labeling, food monopolies, price fixing, consumer credit defense, etc.).

561 e. ☐ Articles on consumer legislation and the consumer movement.

340 f. ☐ Columns and features ("Quote Without Comment," "The Docket," etc.).

#### 3. WOULD YOU FAVOR:

676 a. ☐ More photographs in the *Reports*.

663 b. ☐ Complete photographic treatment of suitable reports.

463 c. ☐ Less photographs.

8469 d. ☐ Present proportions of photographs to text.

#### 4. DO YOU FIND THE STYLE OF WRITING USED IN THE *REPORTS*:

310 a. ☐ Too involved.

183 b. ☐ Too simple.

6184 c. ☐ OK as is.

#### 5. DO YOU USE THE *BUYING GUIDE* IN YOUR DAY-TO-DAY SHOPPING:

1093 a. ☐ Regularly.

2998 b. ☐ Frequently.

1619 c. ☐ Only occasionally.

#### 6. WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF THE EDITORIAL STATEMENTS ON THE WORK AND PURPOSES OF CU WHICH HAVE BEEN APPEARING ON THE INSIDE FRONT COVER OF THE *REPORTS*:

4082 a. ☐ Interesting.

781 b. ☐ A bore but probably worth running.

327 c. ☐ Should be discontinued.

Suggest here, if you wish, topics to be treated in this space:

361 .....

#### 7. WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN SMALL PREMIUMS (BOOKS, ETC.) OFFERED TO MEMBERS FOR GETTING NEW MEMBERS IN CU:

1552 a. ☐ Yes.

3508 b. ☐ No.

#### 8. WOULD YOU APPROVE OF A BARGAIN TRIAL MEMBERSHIP IN CU SAY, THREE ISSUES OF THE *REPORTS* FOR 50¢ AS A MEANS OF GETTING NEW MEMBERS:

4346 a. ☐ Yes.

742 b. ☐ No.

#### 9. WILL YOU READ THROUGH THE LATEST ISSUE OF *BREAD & BUTTER*, CU'S NEW WEEKLY PUBLICATION, AND THEN CHECK ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:

2029 a. ☐ OK as is.

2352 b. ☐ Should include more information on specific commodities.

702 c. ☐ Should include other types of material.

#### 10. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF MATERIAL WOULD YOU SUGGEST ADDING TO *BREAD & BUTTER*:

1315 a. ☐ A food column giving hints on buying and preparing food, recipes, etc.

1110 b. ☐ A column taking up common health problems.

2693 c. ☐ More brand name ratings of food, clothing and household supplies.

3150 d. ☐ More advice on how to judge quality of products.

964 e. ☐ News of organized consumer activities.

# Financial Statement

**I**N CONNECTION with the following statement, it should be emphasized that the relatively small expenditures for technical work do not by any means represent the total amount of work done for Consumers Union members. More than 200 technical consultants in university, government and private laboratories, as well as members of the American Ass'n of Scientific Workers, have assisted Consumers Union's technical staff—in large part for nominal fees or at no cost to the organization.

Exact estimates of the value of such contributions to Consumers Union's technical program are impossible, but it is safe to say that they represent many thousands of dollars worth of work, involving many thousands of dollars worth of laboratory equipment—none of which can be reflected in this statement.

At the same time, Consumers Union has added considerably to the facilities of its own laboratories, particularly in textile and radio equipment. An increasing amount of testing is consequently being done by staff technicians at appreciable savings to the organization.

BERNARD J. REIS, *Treasurer*

## Consumers Union of United States, Inc.

### Statement of Income and Expenses for the Period from June 1, 1940 to May 31, 1941

#### INCOME:

Initial Memberships.....	\$110,600.90	
Less: Cost of Securing Above Income:		
Salaries .....	\$1,428.71	
Advertising .....	1,603.75	
Postage .....	12,899.75	
Printing .....	17,919.72	
Mailing .....	13,304.96	
Contest Costs.....	2,013.83	
Other Promotion Department Expenses.....	233.28	
Total Promotion Department Expenses	49,404.00	
Net Income Secured From Initial Memberships.....		\$61,196.90
Renewals .....	\$64,742.48	
Less: Cost of Securing Renewals:		
Salaries .....	\$714.36	
Printing .....	1,335.09	
Postage .....	1,330.79	
Mailing .....	122.20	
Other Charges.....	20.48	
Total Renewal Expenses.....	3,522.92	
Net Income Received From Renewals.....		61,219.56
"Bread and Butter" Income.....		11,428.18
Sales of Reports.....		10,391.33
Sales of Books and Binders.....		7,170.07
Insurance Advisory Service, Royalties, etc.....		549.70
Contributions .....		242.80
Miscellaneous .....		1,508.41
Total Income Available For Direct Activities of the Organization .....		\$153,706.95

#### EXPENSES (for Promotion and Renewal Costs, see above):

Cost of Preparation of Material for Reports and Buying Guide Not Including Value of Services Contributed:		
Salaries .....	\$22,330.95	
Outside Tests, Consultants' Fees and Laboratory Expenses.....	12,814.16	
Telephone and Telegraph.....	799.05	
Total .....		\$35,944.16
Cost of Reports and Buying Guide:		
Reports .....	\$25,733.79	
Buying Guide.....	5,750.62	
Postage and Mailing Expenses.....	9,394.36	
Other Expenses.....	476.50	
Total Cost of Reports and Buying Guide.....		41,355.27
Cost of Maintaining Membership Records and of Preparing Envelopes and Wrappers for All Mailings to Members:		
Salaries .....	\$10,456.79	
Supplies .....	1,165.72	
Total .....		11,622.51
"Bread and Butter" Expenses.....		5,739.82
Cost of Working with Membership Groups, Speakers Bureau, Preparation of Material for Classroom Use, Work on Consumer Legislation, etc.:		
Salaries .....	\$4,473.31	
Printing .....	471.13	
Postage .....	1,626.47	
Miscellaneous .....	812.97	
Total .....		7,383.88
Cost of Books and Binders Sold.....		3,185.52
Administrative and General Expenses:		
Director's Salary.....	\$3,255.00	
Stenographers and Bookkeeping.....	3,352.39	
Routine Tasks.....	4,726.44	
Other Salaries.....	5,083.73	
Rent of Entire Office, Cleaning and Light Stationery and Office Supplies.....	5,702.45	
Postage .....	1,851.55	
Telephone and Telegraph.....	827.29	
Bank Charges.....	799.05	
Annual Meeting and Balloting Expenses.....	340.87	
Social Security Taxes.....	1,408.27	
Other General and Administrative Expenses .....	2,257.47	
Total General and Administrative Expenses.....	5,091.75	
Total General and Administrative Expenses.....		34,696.26
TOTAL EXPENSES .....		\$139,927.42

INCOME ON OPERATIONS.....	\$13,779.53
Less: Depreciation of Office Furniture and Fixtures, Cabinets, etc. ....	3,376.86
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENSES.....	\$10,402.67

#### Auditor's Certificate

I have audited the books and records of Consumers Union of United States, Inc., for the year ended May 31, 1941, and submit herewith a statement of income and expenses for the year.

The entire amount of subscription income is included in this report, and no amount has been set up as a reserve for the unexpired portion of the subscription accounts.

Subject to this comment, I hereby certify that, in my opinion, this statement of income and expenses for the year ended May 31, 1941 is correct.

MORTIMER D. GOULD

Certified Public Accountant (N. Y.)

October 15, 1941



"bore but probably worth running" category. 6% came right out and said they should be discontinued.

#### NEW MEMBERS

The questionnaire contained proposals for two methods of bringing new members into Consumers Union. Returns showed that members favored one method, were not interested in the other.

59% of those replying said they wouldn't be interested in premiums—books and the like—for enrolling new members (so premiums on gift memberships were not offered during the Christmas season just past).

But a larger percentage (73%) did like the idea of offering a "bargain" trial membership for a short period at a reduced rate to get new people interested in CU (such a rate is now being considered).

#### BREAD & BUTTER

CU directors used the questionnaire to find out what members thought of CU's news weekly, *Bread & Butter*—how they liked it, what they wanted added to it. Returns showed that while 34% liked it the way it was, a larger number (40%) voted for the suggestion that more information on specific commodities be added. Some (12%) said, in general, that it should include "other types" of material.

When it came to possible topics to be included in *Bread & Butter*, most members wanted at least one type of material given more space, and some wanted more emphasis on three or four types. As with the *Reports*, returns seemed to show a rousing vote for "more of everything."

Specifically, about one-half (53%) of the members asked for more advice on how to judge quality of products. A slightly smaller number (45%) favored increasing brand ratings of food, clothing and household supplies. Other votes were cast, in order of preference, for: (1) a food column giving hints on buying and preparing foods; (2) a column discussing common health problems; (3) news of organized consumer activities.

Acting on these returns, CU's staff revamped *Bread & Butter* last September to give more space to commodity information, buying guidance and news of organizing activities. A food column is being worked out now and will probably make its appearance in *Bread & Butter* soon.

#### BUYING GUIDE

Returns indicated that about three out of four CU members use their *Buying Guides* "regularly" or "frequently" in their day-to-day shopping, while the rest said they used it "only occasionally."

## Automobile Insurance

*There are three main hazards to insure against, three types of coverage, and three kinds of companies. This report analyzes them all and arrives at some recommendations for your guidance*

FROM the car owner's point of view, automobile insurance is essentially a plan to spread over a large group the hazards of owning and operating an automobile. These hazards are three, and for each there is a suitable form of insurance protection.

The first, and by far the most important hazard, is the possibility that you may injure or kill someone while driving an automobile. If you are at fault, then you (and the owner, if it is not your car) are legally liable for damages.

The amount of such damages depends on the income and status of the victim, on whether the case comes to trial or is settled out of court, and (in the event of a jury trial) on what the jury may do.

A death may cost as little as \$1,200 for an aged man of uncertain income, to as much as \$10,000 or \$25,000 in the case of a young professional man with a good income. Awards at times bear a relation to the expected life income of the victim. Most injuries have a fairly standard settlement value.

The insurance coverage against this hazard is called Bodily Injury (or Public Liability) and the National Standard policy agrees:

To pay on behalf of the insured all sums which the insured shall become obligated to pay by reason of the liability imposed upon him by law for damages, including damages for care and loss of services, because of bodily injury, including death resulting at any time therefrom, sustained by any person or persons, caused by accident and arising out of the ownership, maintenance or use of the automobile.

Note the limitation to "legal liability" of the insured. In some States the right of a guest passenger to sue the owner or driver for accidental injury is severely restricted. In most States a wife may not sue her husband (and vice versa) in an auto accident, nor may a minor dependent sue father or mother.

The second hazard is damage to the property of others, which may run all the way from a scratched fender to the cost of a new store front. Telephone poles cost \$12 and up, an electric light pole with a transformer may cost \$100, damages to another vehicle may cost the full before-the-smash value of that vehicle.

The appropriate insurance for this hazard is called Property Damage Liability,

and the standard clause agrees in the same language as above to pay for "damages because of injury to or destruction of property" as a result of automobile accident.

Bodily Injury and Property Damage are separate coverages, but many insurance companies will not write one without the other. The company also agrees to defend the insured in any damage suits, even though false or groundless, and to bear certain other legal costs.

The third hazard is damage to or destruction of your car by collision, fire, theft, &c. This is met by two coverages: (1) Fire and Theft (including the so-called Comprehensive type); and (2) Collision, which insures against loss due to accident by collision or upset. Both these coverages are usually written by different companies from those which write Bodily Injury and Property Damage coverages.

If automobile insurance is bought on the basis of the fundamental function of insurance, which is to protect against crushing loss, it is obvious that Bodily Injury and Property Damage are the most important buys. Thousands of automobile accidents each year result in verdicts which would wipe out the average man's possessions entirely and take a large part of his salary for years to come.

Fire, Theft, and Collision insurance do not fulfill the basic function of insurance to the same degree, because the loss cannot exceed the value of the automobile in any event, and that declines steadily as the car grows older. Still and all, a car is these days often absolutely necessary, and all too often the financial status of its owner is not such that he could replace the car if it were lost or repair it if it were very badly damaged. To the extent that this may be true, the car owner should consider insurance for these hazards.

The question of what insurance to buy and how much is usually not difficult if these principles are kept in mind.

**COVERAGES.** To protect you against damage to the person or property of others, most policies provide coverage for Bodily Injury up to \$5,000 for one person and \$10,000 for one accident, and Property Damage coverage up to \$5,000. In

some localities laws, juries or a few ambulance-chasing lawyers make it advisable to insure for double these limits, at an additional cost of about 15%. In view of the moderate extra cost, it might be wise to do that anyway.

\$5,000 Property Damage coverage is adequate.

Some companies write \$1,000 Single Limit policies, which cover you only up to a total of \$1,000 for both Bodily Injury and Property Damage resulting from any one accident. Since this coverage is inadequate, and since it costs but little less than coverages for the standard amounts mentioned, it is not recommended.

Because the cost is slight, many car owners buy Fire and Theft insurance almost automatically. The best form is the Comprehensive type, in which the company agrees "To pay for loss of or damage to the automobile due to any cause, except collision or upset."

Some companies have hedged on Comprehensive by defining damage from "falling objects" as damage caused only by airplanes or parts thereof.

There are several types of Collision coverage. Most widely used is the "deductible" form, in which the car owner agrees to pay the first \$25 or \$50 of the damages resulting from an accident, with the company paying the rest. In some States the so-called "option" type is written, whereby the car owner pays only a part of the premium and has the option of paying the rest if he is in an accident; and some companies write an "80-20" form, in which the owner pays the first 20% (up to \$50) of the damage.

All these forms serve the same purpose, which is to make the owner pay some part of the damage to his car resulting from an accident. The cost of "straight" collision insurance, in which the company pays the entire damages, is prohibitive.

A few companies issue a "split" collision coverage, one part covering damage caused by collision with a stationary object including roadbed and upset, and the other part covering damages caused by a movable object. The insured under such a policy is very apt to assume he has full coverage until he has a collision loss that is not covered. Read your policy.

**KINDS OF COMPANIES.** Nearly all automobile insurance companies fall into one of three classes—stock, mutual or reciprocal. Stock companies are run for private profit and controlled by stockholders. Some of them—the so-called "participating" stock companies—pay a dividend or rebate to policyholders at the end of the policy year.

Mutual companies are supposed to be controlled by and run for the benefit of

the policyholders, but usually (except in the case of certain mutuals under cooperative auspices) they are controlled by a few officers and directors. Policyholders in a mutual company get back a certain percentage of their premiums as dividends and, in some companies in some States, are subject to assessment for losses which the company sustains. In actual fact, however, despite stock company propaganda, there is practically no chance of being assessed for an additional payment.

In reciprocal companies, which are most common in the west, the policyholder receives a dividend both as a policyholder and as a "partner" in the enterprise and bears about the same potential liability as with a mutual company. Reciprocals (also called exchanges or associations) have a higher mortality rate than either stock or mutual companies.

In deciding upon the type of company with which to place his insurance, the average car owner can save substantial sums without the slightest sacrifice of safety by choosing a good mutual or participating stock company. These companies return a substantial portion of the premium (usually 15% to 25%) at the end of the policy year, or in many States charge lower rates, or in some States do both.

A few years ago most of the stock companies, to compete with mutuals, offered a safe driver award in the form of a small dividend or return of part of the premium for not presenting a claim in the policy year. Many of the stock concerns have more recently adopted a classification of drivers into A-1, A and then the standard B rate.

A driver qualifies for the lower A-1 rate if he complies with certain restrictions in respect to mileage driven, use of car, number and age of drivers. The A rate is intermediate in amount and in restrictions. Only a small percentage of drivers can qualify and they can usually find lower rates in a reliable mutual without sacrifice of coverage or claim service.

**HOW TO SELECT A COMPANY.** The first and most important rule is never to buy auto insurance from a company which is not licensed to do business in your State. If it is not, you may have to go to the courts of the insurance company's home State in case of a disagreement. Also, find out whether the company's claim and adjustment service is nationwide in scope.

Compare the policies of various companies—but don't let a salesman exaggerate the importance of some insignificant policy feature; you'll probably find that other companies include the same

clause as a matter of course. An auto insurance salesman may dwell on Drive-Other-Car Endorsement, or Theft Rental Reimbursement, or Trailer Coverage, to establish a superior value to his policy, whereas in fact these benefits are a part of all standard policies.

One worthwhile endorsement written in many States at slight extra cost insures you and the occupants of your car for medical costs arising from an accident, no matter who may be at fault.

Most low cost companies prefer to write their insurance through their own agents rather than through insurance brokers (who deal with many companies). There is no objection to placing your automobile insurance through a broker—provided you don't have to pay for the privilege either by higher initial premiums or by splitting the dividend.

In choosing among companies which meet the simple conditions indicated here, economy should be your aim. It is obviously impossible to list all the dozens of acceptable mutual and participating stock companies, but here are a few whose rates you might investigate before placing your insurance:

#### *Mutual Companies*

American Mutual Liability Insurance Co., Boston.  
Employers Mutual Liability Insurance Co., Wausau, Wis.  
Farm Bureau Mutual Auto Insurance Co. (under cooperative auspices), Columbus, Ohio.  
Liberty Mutual Insurance Co., Boston.  
Lumberman's Mutual Casualty Co. of Illinois, Chicago.  
Utica Mutual Insurance Co., Utica, N. Y.

#### *Participating Stock Companies*

Allstate Insurance Co. (owned by Sears-Roebuck), Chicago.  
American Motorists Insurance Co., Chicago.  
Manufacturers Casualty Insurance Co., Philadelphia.

**STATE REGULATION.** All States regulate insurance companies to some degree, usually by licensing them to do business in that State. Licensing commonly involves the determination of a company's solvency, supervision of its operation, and (in some States) regulation of the rates which may be charged.

The 12 "rate-regulated" States<sup>1</sup> vary widely among themselves, from those requiring that all companies charge the same rates to those which require only that companies notify the State insurance department before changing their rates. By and large, however, the strictest laws

<sup>1</sup> Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia and Washington.



and regulations will be found in these 12 States, and companies licensed to operate in all of them are almost certain to be sound.

Rate-fixing is an extremely complex procedure, which can only be touched on here. It involves dividing the State into a number of areas and using experience tables gathered over many years to predict the number and type of accidents which may be expected in each area.

Not nearly all the premiums paid in to insurance companies are paid out in claims, however. Claims and "allocated claim costs" (that is, expenses which may be charged to a specific accident) usually amount to 45% or 50% of total premiums paid in. The other half goes for expenses, commissions, &c.

The reason why insurance costs less through mutual companies is partly because of slightly lower claim costs (due to more careful selection of risks) but primarily because of very much lower expenses than with ordinary stock companies.

**APPLYING FOR INSURANCE.** The first rule is to understand as clearly as possible exactly what coverages you are getting and under what conditions. Not all the companies use the National Standard policy and, of those which do, some make special reservations or stipulations. Note the exact hour and minute on which the insurance is to become effective. *Never* conceal facts concerning accidents in previous years, for if you do the company may claim fraud in event of an accident.

**WHEN YOU RECEIVE YOUR POLICY.** The first thing to do when you receive your policy is to read it. If there are any parts you don't understand, write the com-

pany for an interpretation. Observe carefully what notice you must give to the company in transferring the insurance from one car to another. Verify carefully your name, address, occupation, and identification of your car (especially the engine number) as it appears on your policy.

Remember that failure to pay premiums promptly may invalidate your insurance. The standard policies have no period of grace for payment of premiums, therefore payments should be made before the due date. If the premium is sent by mail, the post office cancellation date governs.

**ACCIDENT, LOSS, THEFT, &c.** See that any injured person receives first aid. Next, notify the police. Third, notify the company (and the agent, too, if possible) by telegram or telephone collect giving the policy number, nature and type of accident, and probable extent of damages.

If the car must be left on the highway, try to move it out of any danger zone, and also attempt to protect it from stripping by thieves. If you can avoid it, do not begin any repair work or buy any replacement parts until the company authorizes you to do so.

In any accident involving damage to the person or property of others, be courteous even if the other driver is not. Give your name, address, driver's license and car registration number. *Write down* the same information concerning not only the other party, but also any witnesses (witnesses can often be traced by car registration number alone). The presence of even one witness may determine whether you have to stand trial, which can be a long and arduous process even though you are insured against ultimate loss.

New York's Page-Anderson Law, which goes into effect January 1, 1942, has the following important provisions: the auto registration of both parties in an accident involving personal injury, or property damage over \$25, is revoked until (1) adequate security is deposited with the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles to pay for any possible damages resulting from that accident; and (2) both parties prove their future financial responsibility, which in most cases means filing an insurance policy with \$5,000-\$10,000 Bodily Injury and \$1,000 Property Damage coverages.

You will not be allowed to sell your car nor drive another car in New York State while your registration is revoked. Certain major traffic violations also will

require that you prove future financial responsibility. And the law will apply both to out-of-State cars in New York and, in certain circumstances, to New York drivers while driving through other States.

The New York law, quite similar to the New Hampshire law, was exactly what the insurance companies wanted; they have always opposed compulsory auto insurance.

Assuredly one of the reasons for the attitude of the companies is that, under the half-way Page-Anderson Law, they figure to write much more insurance without running the risk of any more regulation. Compulsory insurance, which would establish financial responsibility *before* an accident occurred, should properly lead to stricter regulation of insurance costs. And that, in turn, should result in lower rates and less hardship on the low-income driver.

The ultimate goal should be compulsory auto insurance set up like workmen's compensation—that is, it should entirely remove the question of who is at fault in an accident, and make payments for personal injury on a standard scale. Such a system would not only assure some compensation in case of injury, but also would drastically cut legal, investigation and settlement costs, which represent a sizable fraction of present policy rates.

## CONSUMERS UNION

17 Union Square W., N. Y. C.

I am enclosing \$..... for which please send me the material I have checked below:

- ☐ "Your Marriage"—\$2.
- ☐ "Look Before You Cook"—\$1.50.
- ☐ **Special Combination Offer—**  
 "Look Before You Cook" (\$1.50)  
 "Good Health & Bad Medicine" (\$1.50)  
 "Our Common Ailment" (\$1.00)  
 "Wines & Liquors" (50¢)  
 —Price to CU Members for all four—\$3.
- ☐ "How to Buy Furs"—50¢.
- ☐ Bound Volumes, 1936-37, 1938, 1939, 1940—each \$1.75. 1941—\$2.50. (Check year.)
- ☐ Complete Set of Volumes Ordered Together—\$8.
- ☐ Any Three Volumes Ordered Together—\$5.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

ISP2

## Financial Responsibility Laws

**T**HIRTY-THREE States and the District of Columbia have laws dealing with financial responsibility in case of automobile accident. Most of them are weak, but Massachusetts (where auto insurance is compulsory), New Hampshire, Maine and New York have already passed very stringent statutes.

These laws, making auto insurance either compulsory or highly desirable, work a definite hardship on low-income drivers; on the good side, they aim to make driving safer and moderate the crushing losses which result from unavoidable accidents as well as irresponsible driving. New Hampshire deaths from auto accidents were reportedly cut in half by the operation of that State's law.

January, 1942

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## Cumulative Index

Each issue of the Reports contains this cumulative index of principal material carried since publication of the 1942 Buying Guide issue. By supplementing the Buying Guide index with this one, members can instantly locate current material and keep abreast of changes resulting from new tests. Page numbers run consecutively beginning with the January 1942 issue.

Reports starred replace material in the 1942 Buying Guide.

Air raids, preparations.....	14
Automobile insurance.....	23
Consumers Union	
—financial statement.....	22
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Motor oils, winter.....	15
Nose drops, mineral oil.....	19
Pencils, mechanical.....	12
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## CONSUMERS UNION

17 Union Square W., N. Y. C.

I ENCLOSE \$3.50 FOR WHICH PLEASE

☐ Enter me as a member of Consumers Union and send me the Reports and Buying Guide for one year.

☐ Renew my membership for one year.

I ENCLOSE \$4 FOR WHICH PLEASE

☐ Enter me as a member and send me the Reports and Buying Guide and Bread & Butter for one year.

☐ Renew my membership for one year and send me Bread & Butter to run concurrently with the Reports.

I ENCLOSE 50¢ FOR WHICH PLEASE

☐ Send me Bread & Butter for the duration of my CU membership (up to one year).

I ENCLOSE \$1 FOR WHICH PLEASE

☐ Enter my subscription to Bread & Butter for one year.

I AGREE TO KEEP CONFIDENTIAL ALL MATERIAL SO DESIGNATED.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

ICU2

## Labor: The Oil Industry

**O**IL WORKERS have come a long way since CU last reported on the industry. In 1937, only two companies whose products had been tested by CU operated entirely under union contract. Last year, the Oil Workers International Union (CIO) signed 64 new contracts covering 15,000 workers not previously protected, and won substantial wage increases.

In the last few years, the character of the oil industry has been changing. A swing to a larger proportion of skilled workers has no doubt aided organizing. Technological developments have greatly increased the output per man-hour, have increased corporate profits and cut down employment opportunities.

CU wrote for information on the oil industry to AFL and CIO sources, and to the companies involved. Information given here is based on replies from the Oil Workers International Union, CIO (apparently the most active union in the industry), from the companies that replied, and on NLRB data. No information on individual companies was received from the AFL.

Hours per week ran from 36 to 40, minimum wages from \$24.30 to \$32.50, when CU got its data (in November).

Here are the companies whose labor policies are considered fair by the Oil Workers International Union:

**Sinclair Refining Co. (Sinclair Pennsylvania, Opaline).** This is the one firm CU reported fair as far back as 1936. "We have been under agreement with this company for the past 7 years," states the union, "and they have continuously endeavored to improve their labor relations. Our relationship is excellent." Wages are among the best in the industry. 4300 are employed at plants where motor oil is made, writes the company.

**Cities Service Oil Co. (Koolmotor).** "We have a number of agreements . . . approximately 4,000 employees are covered," the union writes.

**The Texas Co. (Texaco).** "Relations with various unions according to the employees' choice," reports the company. "Their labor policies are uniform and they are not difficult to bargain with," says the OWIU.

**Pennzoil Co. (Pennzoil).**

**Richfield Oil Co. (Richfield).**

The following companies are considered unfair by the OWIU, even though in some cases the union has won agreements in a few plants:

**American Oil Co. (Amoco).** The OWIU has agreements in three small plants, but reports: "We have experienced much difficulty in retaining our bargaining rights."

**Atlantic Refining Co. (Atlantic).**

**Gulf Oil Corp. (Gulpride, Gulfube).** "Regarded as anti-labor," states the union, in spite of contracts covering two small plants.

**Indian Refining Co. (Havoline).** Controlled by The Texas Co., but unorganized. Because of this, comments the union, wages are 10¢ an hour below those paid to the organized Texas workers.

**Macmillan Petroleum Corp. (Ring Free).** "Not aggressively anti-labor, but certainly not pro-labor . . . wages are relatively low," says the OWIU.

**Phillips Petroleum Co. (Phillips 66).** "One of the most vicious anti-union companies in the oil industry," reports the union. "They are, we believe, the lowest paid group of employees in any of the 20 major oil corporations. . . . We succeeded last year in collecting \$28,000 back pay for some 15 employees that were discharged unfairly."

**Quaker State Oil Refining Co. (Quaker State).** "Anti-labor and quite vicious in their tactics," states the union. The NLRB, in a November 1940 decision on the Farmers Valley, Pa., plant, ordered the company to cease interfering with its employees' right to self-organization. The company reports that at one plant it has a union affiliated with the AFL.

**Shell Oil Co. (Golden Shell, Shell).** "Un-American in most of their activities towards union labor. . . . We have had more Labor Board cases with this company than all the rest of them put together," reports the OWIU.

**Standard Oil: Socony-Vacuum Oil Co. (Mobiloil, Lubrite); Standard Oil Co. of New Jersey (Esso); Standard Oil Co. of Indiana (Iso-Vis).** Labor policies of all three companies seem about the same. "Because of their monopolistic control of the oil industry," says the union of Socony-Vacuum, "they are able to pay top wages, but in very few instances, except those where we have agreements with them, do they . . . permit protection of the employees through seniority agreements." Standard Oil companies have figured in several NLRB cases.

**Sun Oil Co. (Sunoco).** "Their policy is anti-union," states the OWIU.

**Tidewater Associated Oil Co. (Tydol).** "Policies regarding labor are somewhat in the line with the Standard Oil Co.," says the union.

CU has no information on the labor conditions under which *Sears', Ward's, Strauss, and Kendall* oils are manufactured. Co-op oils are bought from a number of suppliers, so that no general statement can be made about them.



## The Docket

Notes on government actions against misleading advertising, false claims, dangerous products

**The Federal Trade Commission has issued a complaint against:**

**L. E. Waterman Co.** The Commission objects to the company's advertising slogans: "Waterman's 100 year pens," "The only pen guaranteed 100 years against all but loss or wilful damage." This implies, according to the Commission, that Waterman's pens are so superior in quality and durability that they will last 100 years without need for repair or adjustment. And such is not the case.

What the company's "100 year guarantee" really amounts to, says the Commission, is a contract whereby the company agrees to make necessary repairs and adjustments at a flat rate of 35¢—regardless of the extent of damage—each time a pen is sent to it, for a period of 100 years.

In answering the Commission's complaint, the company declared that the purchasing public is well acquainted with guarantees of this type, "such guarantees having been common to the trade for over fifteen years," and that consequently "no substantial portion of the purchasing public" has been misled by the company's advertising.

The Eversharp Co. offers a similar "lifetime" guarantee with its mechanical pencils (see page 12).

**Nu-Tone Laboratories**, manufacturers and distributors of Nu-Tone and Perfectone "aerial eliminators" and Clear-Tone, Nu-Tone and Marvel "line noise eliminators." The Commission charges that this company has advertised that its aerial eliminator procures "greater distance, perfect selectivity and tone," and that it eliminates the need for all outside wires and reduces static and noise. These claims are misleading and untrue, says the Commission, because the device won't perform the function of an aerial, nor will it improve the tonal quality or selectivity of radios or reduce noises due to static except at the expense of the incoming program, or bring in distant stations which a radio ordinarily won't pick up.

The company has made similar claims for its line noise eliminator, all of which, the Commission charges, are false.

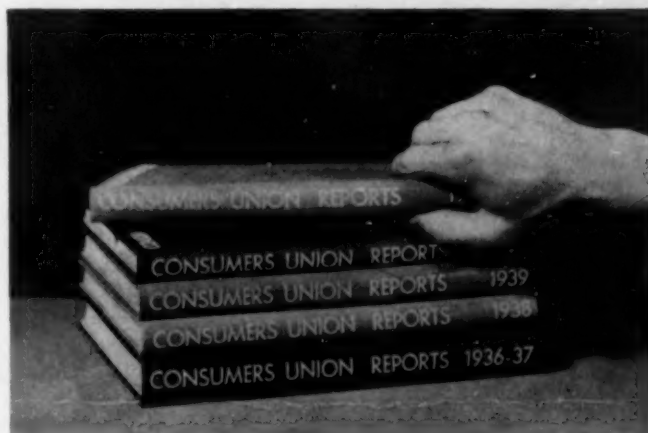
CU has always advised against the purchase of aerial and static eliminators. (See "The Radio Repairman," CU Reports, October 1941.)

**The Federal Trade Commission has taken action against:**

**The Cream of Wheat Corp.** The makers of this famous breakfast cereal will no longer claim that their product provides all the food values a person needs, or that it contains as much protein as soft cream cheese and more carbohydrates than bread, or that it will supply strength when needed. This is the basis of an agreement made with the FTC.

**Lady Esther, Ltd.** According to the Commission, this company has been implying in its advertising that face powders sold in competition with Lady Esther powder contain sand and other gritty materials and that use of these competitive products will result in loss of beauty or will produce an appearance of age. The company has agreed not to make such charges, or, in fact, to give out any statements which tend to "disparage competitive products." For consumers, CU's tests of face powders in the past have shown that starch is the only harmful ingredient found nowadays (some people are sensitive to it), that most powders are so much alike in composition and effect as to make price the chief factor in the selection of face powder.

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*Special note: many organizations and groups (trade union, church, PTA, &c.) are giving new attention to consumer problems because of their growing importance in the national war program. For such groups these bound volumes constitute an almost indispensable source of basic information. If you belong to one of these groups, why don't you suggest at your next meeting that a full set of the volumes be purchased for the use of all members?*

**USE ORDER FORM ON PAGE 25**

# Bread & Butter

"FACTS YOU NEED BEFORE YOU BUY"

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT 1945 BY CONSUMERS UNION OF UNITED STATES, INC., A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION, 37 UNION SQUARE WEST, NEW YORK, N. Y.  
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Vol. 1, No. 41 Dec. 4, 1941  
Be A Copy, \$1 A Year (52 issues)

## WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THE THINGS YOU BUY

**BUDGET FOR 1943 NOW**  
Wage payments for the nation as a whole have already started down—some in dollars, but in purchasing power. They've been going down, in fact, since June of this year and they'll go down much faster in the months to come.

The cost-of-living figures in back of this statement are conservative ones—they include a lot of items that haven't changed much yet.

But food is up 181%.

ported, wanted appliance manufacturers to put out more electrical goods. "The report hinted that OPM was willing to reconsider a 50% curtailment, now in prospect, if manufacturers would only make stores to sell for \$40 or \$50 (instead of \$100 and up)."

The appliance makers can do it; already they've been making this for

limited the government plan to add only the excise tax (a tax on the manufacturer's price) to the list prices of their goods. Others took advantage of the situation to move retail prices up as much as 20%.

### CANNERS' DEFENSE

The growth of grade-labeling has the National Canners Association

## SPEARHEAD IN THE WAR AGAINST WASTE

● The new war economy, as it takes hold, is going to bear much lighter on the people who know what's happening than on the people who don't.

More important, the people who know what's going on can make a far more effective contribution to the national war effort than those who don't know.

Intelligent buying and using, in these times more than ever before, will mean much money saved and many wastes avoided. And these same practices, carried out in millions of families, can have a far-reaching influence on the nation's drive for victory.

We believe sincerely that in the present circumstances *Bread & Butter* comes close to being required reading for the conscientious and well-informed consumer.

Because we know that in these times a consumer cannot act intelligently without knowing what is happening to the prices he pays and the products he buys, without knowing ways to save in buying, avoid waste in using.

And we know of no other publication in America which is so thoroughly dedicated to helping him find out.

• • •

Since *Bread & Butter* started, ten months ago, an average of nearly 1,000 persons have taken out subscriptions every week. *Bread & Butter* is publishing its 45th issue as the *Reports* goes to press and present subscribers total just about 40,000.

That's an impressive record; and even so, *Bread & Butter* should be reaching many, many more people.

At *Bread & Butter's* subscription price—\$1 for 52 issues—we cannot afford to spend money to tell people that it is being published for them. We priced it as low as we could so that the people who need it most can afford to have it. And there is not enough left of the \$1—after costs of preparing, producing and mailing 52 issues have been met—to pay the cost of promoting it.

There is no surplus with which to buy advertisements, pay representatives, or even stand the postage for a letter.

But through the *Reports* we can talk to the members of CU. And the members of CU are among the most active, most informed consumers in America.

So let us talk, fast and to the point.

**Many CU members do not now get *Bread & Butter*.**

They can get it as part of their membership for a small additional payment. And we guarantee that the information in it will pay back the extra outlay many times over.

**Many CU members do take *Bread & Butter*.** They, better than any others, can do the job that our \$1 does not let us do. They can get their friends to take it. They can give it.

We do not feel that we are asking favors when we ask the members of Consumers Union to help in the drive to make *Bread & Butter* more useful by making it more widely read.

In a world at war, the war against waste is the consumer's own private war. And *Bread & Butter* is the spearhead of the consumer battle lines!

### CU WEEKLY • MONTHLY • YEARLY

*Bread & Butter* costs \$1 a year (52 issues) if you subscribe to it separately. You can get it for as long as your present CU membership runs (up to one year) for 50¢. New or renewing members can get *Bread & Butter* weekly, and the monthly *Reports* including the yearly Buying Guide, all together for \$4 a year.

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